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POLICIES FOR EDUCATION  
IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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# Policies for Education in American Democracy

Educational Policies Commission

*National Education Association of the United  
States and the American Association of School  
Administrators*

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National Education Association of the United States  
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## FOREWORD

In response to many requests, the Educational Policies Commission here republishes in one volume the essentials of three of its previous publications on education's functions in American democracy.

This volume has been prepared from the material contained in: *The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy* (1937), *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy* (1941), and *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy* (1938).

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the members at the time this reprint was authorized, this list includes those serving on the Commission during the years in which each of the three books in this publication was first published: 1937, 1938, 1941.

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BOOK I

THE UNIQUE FUNCTION  
OF EDUCATION  
IN  
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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## I.

### CIRCUMSTANCES CALL UPON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION AND OBLIGATIONS IN SOCIETY

THE mariner blown out of his course by adverse winds and sailing long under clouded heavens among dangerous reefs seizes the first opportunity to get his bearings and chart his way by fixed marks of sky or land. Likewise in the management of human affairs, although the analogy is not exact, it is often necessary for leaders of state, the professions, and callings, amid great disturbances, to take their reckonings—to recur to first principles. This applies to education as well as to other branches of national interest and activity. None is independent of the others. None occupies a position of impregnable security which permits it to escape the strains in domestic or foreign affairs.

#### *This Adjustment Must Be Made in the Terms of Public Interest*

The answer of education to this summons cannot be made merely in the technical language of the profession, although the imperatives of the profession must be respected. It cannot be given simply in camera, in secret committee. It must be made in full public view and in the terms of the society which education serves, as well as in its own terms. Not for the thoughtless and heedless, to be sure, is the statement to be formulated; but for that large and influential body of citizens who can distinguish between the enduring values of life and the distempers of immediate difficulties, political and economic. Yet no citizens of the Republic can be left out of the reckoning, for the welfare of all is involved in both the program of education and its application.

## *The Center of Observation Is in Society, Not Merely in the Educational Profession*

It is not enough, therefore, to fix attention on professional conceptions of education alone. Observations must also be taken from the center of society, for education, government, economy, and culture are parts of the same thing. Hence a paradox. If educators are to make wide and real the reach of their theory and practice, they must step over the boundaries drawn by their profession and consider the unity of things. By concentrating affections on their sphere of special interest, they will separate education from the living body of society. Important as are the methods and procedures of education, they are means, not ends; and the ends themselves are linked with the genius, spirit, and purposes of the society in which education functions, by which it is sustained, vitalized, and protected. Yet in stepping over the boundaries of their profession to find their bearings, educators are at the same time compelled, by the nature of their obligations, to hold fast to those values of education which endure amid the changes and exigencies of society.

### *Five Guiding Principles Control Our Exploration*

With the challenge of affairs, public and private, so urgent, what are the bearings by which to discover our position and chart our course? To what principles must we refer in discovering the task of education in American democracy? Five seem imperative:

1. Public education is anchored in the history of American civilization and at any given moment operates within the accumulated heritage of that civilization.

2. Every system of thought and practice in education is formulated with some reference to the ideas and interests dominant or widely cherished in society at the time of its formulation.



3. Once created and systematized, any program of educational thought and practice takes on professional and institutional stereotypes, and tends to outlast even profound changes in the society in which it assumed its original shape.

4. Any restatement of educational objectives and responsibilities which is rooted in reality takes into account the nature of professional obligations and makes adjustments to cope with the major changes wrought in society since the last general reckoning in education.

5. Any statement of educational objectives and responsibilities that is not merely theoretical involves a quest for the institutional forms and operating practices through which education can best attain its ends.

## II.

### THE FOUNDERS OF THE REPUBLIC EXALTED EDUCATION AS A NATIONAL INTEREST

IT is out of the historical development of American society that have come the ideas, aspirations, knowledge, and working rules which prevail today and set the task of education. There have been borrowings, of course. Beyond the founding of the Republic lies a vast background embracing the culture of antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and modern Europe. From this plenitude of resources American civilization has been enriched. But all that has been drawn from other times and places has been worked into the American heritage. Additional drafts may be made upon other nations in days to come. Research will bring new knowledge. Experiments may confirm new methods. Novel ideas may bid for favor. The spirit of inquiry and invention may be active. The aspirations of the living will be stirred by the eternal surge of the human heart. Even so, the past, distant and near, has given us our society, including all the material, intellectual, and moral manifestations with which education must work.

#### *The Republic Was Founded in an Age of High Tension*

The independence of America was established by revolution and war, accompanied by inevitable concentration, storm, and stress. America had broken with the past in many respects and had founded government on a new base—social purpose as distinguished from the prescriptive rights of class. It was an infant republic in a world of warring monarchies. Its leaders were searching for ways and means of ensuring the perpetuity of government so conceived, developing natural resources, applying the technical arts, and realizing a better life for the free members of society.

## *Founders of the Republic Laid Stress on the Public Interest*

The founders of the American Republic were concerned with more than the material aspects of life—with more than the exploitation of natural resources, the pursuit of private interests, and the enrichment of individuals. They were public personages imbued with a deep sense of social responsibility. They had staked their lives and their fortunes on independence and the security of the Republic. They had devoted time, energies, and talents to the public interest, waging war against a foreign foe and against greed and passions in their own midst. With justice does a biographer of Washington say: "Excluding his boyhood, there were but seven years of his life in which he was not engaged in the public service."

The early leaders did not subscribe to the economic theory that the pursuit of private gain would automatically bring about the establishment of independence, the creation of a constitution, or the security and prosperity of the American nation. In fact, during the Revolution they had seen gambling in goods and securities almost wreck their cause. After victory had been won they saw emphasis on personal and sectional interests threaten the Union with dissolution. They knew from bitter experience that devotion to the public good and self-denial in private matters were necessary to the achievement of great social ends. Having risked their all in the creation of a nation, the ablest among them gave unremitting attention to the study of public affairs and the methods calculated to preserve and improve the independent society which their labors had brought forth.

## *The Idea of Government by a Fixed Special Interest Was Rejected*

It is true that many extremists relied heavily upon the ancient weapon of statecraft—force—for the assurance of social order, and looked upon government as an instrument of private ad-

vantage. They would have entrenched great wealth in politics by the establishment of high property qualifications on voting and office-holding. They would have given life terms to presidents and senators, and restricted popular participation in public affairs to the smallest possible limits. They would have permanently established a class government—government by “the rich and wellborn,” and were largely indifferent to popular culture and education. But this faction, though influential, was challenged by events. The verdict of the majority finally ran against it. The verdict of history condemned it. In the course of years the government established by the founders of the Republic came to rest on a wide popular base; and with the passing of time that base was broadened by constitutional enactments and political practices.

### *The Democratic Idea Was Accepted*

In fact there was in the United States no aristocracy buttressed by special privileges in public law to provide support for a monarchy or an oligarchy. In the long run the fate of government and society had to be entrusted to the wisdom and knowledge of a widening mass of people. Some Americans accepted that fate with a wry face, but made the best of it. Others greeted it as a fulfilment of the principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, and as marking a humane departure from the despotisms of Europe. This document had asserted that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; and that the people have the right to alter or abolish any form of government which becomes destructive of these ends. Lifted up against the background of European societies founded on force and prescriptive privileges, these were revolutionary doctrines. The future was to decide whether any government so conceived and so dedicated could long endure.

### *Cultural Responsibilities Were Imposed on Government*

Concerning the responsibilities of government in matters of economy and culture, leaders of the Republic had equally positive convictions. They did not conceive government as founded on sheer force and confined to the punishment of criminals. If doubts arise respecting this matter, they can be resolved by reading President Washington's first inaugural address and his first message to Congress. In assuming his duties he declared that the preeminence of free government must be "exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens and command the respect of the world." While recognizing the place of force in national defense and the maintenance of government, he commended to Congress "the advancement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures by all proper means," and the promotion of science, literature, and education. In taking this broad view of statesmanship, Washington was profoundly moved by the challenge of the occasion, for he said: "The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as *deeply*, as *finally* staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."

### *The Vital Relation of Education to the Social Order Was Recognized*

Having committed themselves to government by popular verdict, to a government with high social responsibilities, many founders of the American Republic turned to education as a guarantee that a government of this type would endure—not merely to political education narrowly adapted to the genius of American institutions, but to education in the arts, sciences, and letters, assuring a deeper foundation in civilization itself. If a contemporary, Samuel Blodget, is to be believed, the idea of establishing a national institution of learning was taken up with General Washington in 1775, while Revolu-

tionary soldiers were quartered in buildings on the campus of Harvard College, and Washington then and there approved the idea.<sup>1</sup>

### *American Leaders Turned to Educational Planning*

However that may be, it is certain that shortly after independence was gained, many of the best minds in America began to draft comprehensive plans for systems of universal education, crowned by a national university. Among them was Dr. Benjamin Rush, physician, surgeon-general during the Revolutionary War, member of the Continental Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and member of the Pennsylvania convention that ratified the Constitution. In 1786 he published an educational project, with the arresting title "Thoughts Upon the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic." A few years later the American Philosophical Society offered a prize for "the best system of liberal education and literary instruction, adapted to the genius of the Government of the United States; comprehending also a plan for instituting and conducting public schools in this country, on principles of the most extensive utility." The prize was divided between Samuel Knox and Samuel H. Smith. Other thinkers of the age, including Noah Webster, presented to the public large projects for the education of youth in a manner appropriate to American society and government.

### *Early Educational Plans Were Wide and Deep in Compass*

This is no place to describe these plans or to smooth away their inconsistencies, but a summary of them shows that American ideas on education are the treasures of high statesmanship—not merely the theories of school administrators and

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley, Edgar B. *Proposed: The University of the United States*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1936. 83 p.

teachers.<sup>1</sup> Taking numerous plans of the early Republic collectively, we may say that they were amazingly broad and comprehensive. They projected institutions of learning extending from the primary schools to a national university in charge of research, general instruction, and training for the public service. They dealt with education in its widest terms, as adapted to the nature of American society and government, and as serving the progressive development of individuals and society—not the one or the other exclusively—but both as inseparable. These schemes were not confined to the practical arts and subjects of utility in the conduct of government. They did emphasize, it is true, the practical and political arts; but they went beyond any narrow utilitarianism. They included pure science, letters, and all the arts deemed necessary for a rich, secure, and enlightened civilization; and they recognized the truth that both government and economy rest upon wisdom, knowledge, and aspirations wider and deeper than the interests of immediate marketability.

### *The Role of Women in Civilization Was Recognized*

In seeking to enrich the moral and intellectual resources of society, some of the early educational planners gave attention to the role of women as makers and bearers of culture. They knew from impressive personal experience the part that women had taken in the war for independence—for instance, in keeping economy running, in furnishing war supplies, in sustaining and feeding the spirit of independence in newspapers, pamphlets, and plays, and in private councils. Leaders from General Washington down the line had recognized their services and paid open tribute to their part in the great drama.

It was no accident, then, that Noah Webster, perhaps the most indefatigable among the educational leaders, gave special consideration to the education of women. He believed that

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<sup>1</sup> Hansen, Allen O. *Liberalism and American Education in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1926. 317 p.

their influence in shaping the underlying ideals and policies of the nation was in many ways greater than that of men. Mothers gave to youth firm impressions of life's values and should be educated so that they would set youth in the republican way of life. Taking this cultural influence into full account, Webster insisted that the education of women "should therefore enable them to implant in the tender mind such sentiments of virtue, propriety, and dignity as are suited to the freedom of our government." For this reason he insisted that their education should not be confined to subjects usually taught in schools for girls, but should include science, history, geography, contemporary affairs, and all that then passed for the social studies. "In a system of education that should embrace every part of the community," he urged, "the female sex claims no inconsiderable part of our attention."

*Freedom of Inquiry Was  
Emphasized*

As befitted the temper of the age, early educational planners insisted upon unlimited freedom of inquiry and exposition in institutions of learning. They cast off a priori notions of tradition and brought to the bar of critical examination "all things under the sun"—the works of nature, institutions of church and state, the forms and distribution of property, the relations of property to government, the processes of government, the driving forces of social life, the family and its historic role, the maxims of industry and commerce, and international affairs. And they did this with insight, a wealth of learning, and a firm grasp upon realities. For them, liberty of inquiry and exposition was not merely necessary to the working of popular institutions. It was indispensable to progress in every branch of human affairs. It was one of the noblest expressions of life among a free people. "What are the means of improving and establishing the Union of the States?" This was the question which Noah Webster encountered everywhere in his travels throughout the country in 1785. "Cus-



tom is the plague of wise men and the idol of fools!" he exclaimed. In this spirit, educational planners for the nation proposed to throw off denominational control of education, and emphasized unhampered scientific research, while cherishing a deep sense of social responsibility.

### *Education Was Deemed Indispensable to Popular Government*

The men who had set up the new government after the Revolution were, as a matter of course, especially concerned with political education, with the preparation of the people for self-government. The processes of democracy to which they were committed, explicitly or implicitly, embraced five essential elements: the right of citizens to propose measures and policies, the right to discuss freely all proposed policies and measures, the right to decide issues at the polls, the obligation to accept decisions duly made without resort to force, and the right to appraise, criticize, and amend decisions so made. The preservation of these processes of democracy was assured in part, the founders believed, by laws and institutions guaranteeing freedom of the press, discussion, and decision, but they knew that paper guarantees were not enough. Knowledge and a moral sense were required to sustain democratic processes and to make them constructive, rather than destructive. "In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion," wrote Washington in his Farewell Address, "it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." How? "Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge."

### *Education Was Considered in the Constitutional Convention of 1787*

In the convention that framed the Constitution, James Madison proposed that Congress be empowered "to establish a university," and Charles Pinckney urged a broader provi-

sion: "to establish seminaries for the promotion of literature and the arts and sciences." At a later time in the convention Madison and Pinckney joined in moving for the creation of a university. Upon their project Gouverneur Morris remarked: "It is not necessary. The exclusive power at the seat of government will reach the object." The motion was lost. No express provisions were made in the Constitution for the promotion of education, but leaders among the men who framed that document certainly believed that the power to perform this national service was positively implied. Even Jefferson, speaking later as a strict constructionist, declared that Congress could make appropriations of public lands for that purpose.

### *George Washington Advocated National Aids to Education*

That Washington regarded the fostering of education as an obligation of the federal government was made evident in his first annual address to Congress: "Nor am I less persuaded that you will agree with me in opinion that there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of science and literature. Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours it is proportionably essential. To the security of a free constitution it contributes in various ways . . . Whether this desirable object will be best promoted by affording aids to seminaries of learning already established, by the institution of a national university, or by any other expedients will be well worthy of a place in the deliberations of the Legislature." To other colleagues Washington also revealed solicitude for education.

### *Washington Took a Broad View of Education*

And it was a broad interest. Although Washington, unlike Jefferson, had not enjoyed the privileges of a college

education, and was a man of limited "book knowledge," he had a general and realistic view of education. Speaking of the proposed national university, he said: "I have greatly wished to see a plan adopted, by which the arts, science, and belles-lettres could be taught in their *fullest* extent, thereby embracing *all* the advantages of European tuition, with the means of acquiring the liberal knowledge, which is necessary to qualify our citizens for the exigencies of public as well as private life; and (which with me is a consideration of great magnitude) by assembling the youth from the different parts of this rising republic, contributing from their intercourse and interchange of information to the removal of prejudices, which might perhaps sometimes arise from local circumstances." So deeply impressed was he by the utility of such an institution that he left a part of his estate by will for the endowment of a university in the District of Columbia—a provision never acted upon by Congress.

### *Thomas Jefferson Made Education a Primary Interest*

Although at odds with Washington on many points of policy and committed, while in the opposition, to a narrow construction of the Constitution, Thomas Jefferson was even more deeply and actively concerned with public education than the first President. As a biographer has truly said: "Jefferson was the first conspicuous advocate, in this country, of centralization in education, being a thorough believer in state aid to higher institutions of learning and free education in the common schools supported by local taxation. To him the schoolhouse was the fountain-head of happiness, prosperity, and good government, and education was 'a holy cause.'" A college graduate, a student of the classics, a leader in public affairs, interested in every branch of art, science, and letters, eager to make broad and deep the cultural foundations of democracy, Jefferson dedicated years of his life to the con-

sideration and promotion of education in all its phases, from elementary instruction to advanced research in universities. He was, in many ways, the most highly cultivated man of his time, and, among the great directors of national affairs, he gave the most thought and personal attention to education.

His was no mere lip service. He sought to encompass education, to discover its possibilities, to give it an exalted and permanent position in public policy, and to make it enrich and serve the new society rising in America. It was characteristic of his concern that he omitted from the inscription which he prepared for his own tomb all mention of the high political offices he had held and included the fact that he was the founder of the University of Virginia.

### *Jefferson's Plan Included Wide Elementary Education*

Jefferson's plan of education for the state of Virginia embraced a scheme for elementary schools in every county, so placed that every householder would be within three miles of a school. On this base were to be erected district institutions of higher learning, so distributed that each student would be within a day's ride of a college. Crowning the structure was a university of the highest type dedicated to the freedom of the mind and unlimited research for truth. That sons of the poor might not be denied the privileges of education, Jefferson proposed that "the best genius" of each elementary school, if unable to pay his way, should be sent to the secondary school at public expense, and that the ablest in each secondary institution be maintained at the university free of cost. Thus the elements of learning were to be made available to all, and for the ablest boys, even those without financial resources, the pathway to the university was to be opened. Although the plan was never enacted into law, Jefferson saw clearly that the nation needed talent in public and private affairs, and education was to enable talent to flower.

### *Jefferson's Educational Objectives for Lower Schools Were Individual and Social*

In no single place did Jefferson summarize his philosophy of education, but the following passage from his writings indicates the nature of his thought respecting the ends to be attained:

"(1) To give to every citizen the information he needs for the transaction of his own business;

"(2) To enable him to calculate for himself, and to express and preserve his ideas, his contracts, and accounts, in writing;

"(3) To improve, by reading, his morals and faculties;

"(4) To understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge with competence the functions confided to him by either;

"(5) To know his rights; to exercise with order and justice those he retains; to choose with discretion the fiduciary of those he delegates; and to notice their conduct with diligence, with candor and judgment;

"(6) And, in general, to observe with intelligence and faithfulness all the social relations under which he shall be placed."

### *For His University Jefferson Proclaimed Untrammelled Liberty of Inquiry*

As the motto for his University of Virginia, Jefferson chose the ancient saying: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In that spirit he stipulated complete freedom of inquiry and exposition for the professors, self-government for the faculty, and an honor system for the students. "I have sworn upon the altar of God," he exclaimed, "eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

### *In His University Curriculum Jefferson Emphasized the Social and Natural Sciences*

In laying out a program of university work, Jefferson placed emphasis on the social and natural sciences in a manner so comprehensive that his project may be still studied with advantage, and employed as a guide for educational thought. Its great purposes may be summarized in the language of a special student of Jeffersonian policies:

"(1) To form the statesmen, legislators, and judges, on whom public prosperity and individual happiness depend;

"(2) To expound the principles and structure of government, the laws which regulate the intercourse of nations, those formed municipally for our own government, and a sound spirit of legislation;

"(3) To harmonize and promote the interests of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and by well-informed views of political economy to give a free scope to the public industry;

"(4) To develop the reasoning faculties of our youth, enlarge their minds, cultivate their morals, and instill in them the precepts of virtue and order; and

"(5) To enlighten them with mathematical and physical sciences, which advance the arts, and administer to the health, the subsistence, and comforts of human life."

To Jefferson nothing human was alien; neither the thought of Virgil, nor the invention of a threshing machine. To preserve, advance, and disseminate knowledge in the improvement of individual well-being and social relations was, for Jefferson, a passion that endured to his last days.

### *Jefferson Regarded Education as a Combined National and State Interest*

Despite his immediate concern with education in Virginia, Jefferson was also engrossed in education as a national interest.

In his message of December 2, 1806, he suggested the appropriation of public funds "to the great purposes of the public education, roads, rivers, canals, and such other objects of public improvement as it may be thought proper to add to the constitutional enumeration of Federal powers." He was prepared to amend the Constitution, if necessary, to promote education and economic welfare, but he recognized the fact that Congress already had some authority over these matters, including the power to dedicate public lands to "a national establishment of education." Again, in 1808, in his last message, Jefferson called upon Congress to consider the same theme. Thus even amid the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, which violently disturbed the politics and economy of the United States, the President continued to urge upon Congress and the country an interest that lay close to his heart.

*John Quincy Adams Emulated the  
Example of Washington*

With the administration of John Quincy Adams, "the heroic period of the Revolution" drew to a close. In a strict sense Adams did not belong to it, but as a boy he had gone to Europe and assumed the duties of secretary to his father on a mission for the Republic then battling for existence. He was brought up in the Washington tradition and derived conceptions of policy from that source. Having started life as a Federalist and having transferred his allegiance to the Jeffersonian party, Adams found it possible to combine, in his thought, elements from the two systems of statesmanship. Unlike James Monroe, his immediate predecessor, Adams had no doubts about the constitutionality of the broad views entertained by Washington. With the exception of Jefferson, no President had been more deeply interested in natural science and its beneficent applications than John Quincy Adams. If he could have had his way, the nation's great endowment in natural resources would have been conserved and dedicated to internal improvements, the advancement of science, and the promotion of

education. It was with extreme bitterness that he spoke of the "rapacity" with which politicians "fly at the public lands," engage in "pillage," and act as "enormous speculators and land-jobbers."

*Adams Urged Congress To Promote Science,  
Education, and the Arts*

Seeking to resist the pressure for the dissipation of the national resources, Adams urged upon Congress a broader social policy. "The great object of the institution of civil government," he said in his first annual message, "is the improvement of the condition of those who are parties to the social compact, and no government, in whatever form constituted, can accomplish the lawful ends of its institution but in proportion as it improves the condition of those over whom it is established. Roads and canals, by multiplying and facilitating the communications and intercourse between distant regions and multitudes of men, are among the most important means of improvement. But moral, political, intellectual improvement are duties assigned by the Author of Our Existence to social no less than to individual man. For the fulfilment of those duties governments are invested with power, and to the attainment of the end—the progressive improvement of the condition of the governed—the exercise of delegated powers is a duty as sacred and indispensable as the usurpation of powers not granted is criminal and odious. Among the first, perhaps the very first, instrument for the improvement of the condition of men is knowledge, and to the acquisition of much of the knowledge adapted to the wants, the comforts, and enjoyments of human life public institutions and seminaries of learning are essential."

After laying down this controlling principle, Adams then urged the promotion of "scientific research and inquiry" in "geographical and astronomical science," the exploration of national territories and waters, the erection of an astronomical observatory "connected with the establishment of an university,



or separate from it," the patronage of studies in the science of weights and measures, and the revision of the patent laws. Summarizing the powers of Congress, Adams indicated that they could be brought into action "by laws promoting the improvement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, the cultivation and encouragement of the mechanic and of the elegant arts, the advancement of literature, and the progress of the sciences, ornamental and profound."

If the language of these reflections and recommendations is somewhat stilted, there is no doubt respecting its thought and import. Adams had in mind a conception of the nation as a civilization and the use of its material, intellectual, and moral resources, under public auspices, in "the progressive improvement of the condition of the governed." The powers of the federal government he deemed ample for this purpose and refusal to use them, he thought, "would be treachery to the most sacred of trusts." "The spirit of improvement," he exclaimed, "is abroad upon the earth." Should the federal government fall behind state governments in "holding up the torch of human improvement to eyes that seek the light?"

### *But the Times Were Not Favorable for the Promotion of Plans for Education*

Admirable and promising as were many of these plans for education, the times were not propitious for bringing them to fruition. The great social and economic forces which were to call them into being some forty or fifty years after the adoption of the Constitution had not yet appeared. The population of America consisted of between three and four million persons, thinly scattered over a wide area. Rural civilization predominated. As late as 1820 less than 5 percent of the total population lived in the thirteen cities of eight thousand or over. Slow, crude means of transportation and communication resulted in isolation for most of the people. Collective action was extremely difficult. Moreover, the war for independence had exhausted the resources of the government and had left a war

debt which threatened to keep them depleted over a period of years. The people were engrossed with political matters.

As a consequence of these adverse conditions, education declined to its lowest point since schools were founded by the colonists. The close of the period found local authority strongly entrenched in the administration of education. There was as yet no sign of that integration of small local schools into state school systems which came within the next fifty years. Although during the early national period the federal government began the policy of making land grants which forecast universal education, such grants are more accurately interpreted as a stimulus to the colonization of new territory than as a national policy whose primary purpose was to promote education. In general the national government followed the policy of leaving the provision and administration of education to the states and local communities. Educational as well as national consciousness was yet to awaken, and it was not until some years after the second war with England that plans for popular education began to receive serious consideration; then, state plans, not national plans, were adopted as the schools passed from an administration predominantly local to an administration and control originating with the state.

*Though Temporarily Rejected, the Educational  
Ideals of the Founders Remain Basic for  
Contemporary Thought*

It so happened, then, that the founders of the Republic did not live to see their ideals realized in the establishment of public institutions for education. For this outcome lack of popular interest, the opposition of private schools, and poverty of financial resources were partly responsible. Doubtless even more influential was the popular revolt against the broad conceptions of federal policy which they cherished. With the triumph of Andrew Jackson in 1828 the principles of the Federalist party, with which Washington was associated in spirit, and the prin-

ciples of the Republican party, which Jefferson led, were repudiated in a surge of democracy that was suspicious of all government and soon fell under the dominance of the particularism known as states' rights. Events thus provided a new setting of ideas and interests for the period in which institutions of popular education were actually created and for educational thought itself. In other words, the age of concentration that marked the foundation of the Republic was followed by an age of diffusion, in which the security and perpetuity of the nation were largely taken for granted, despite the shadows of civil dissension. Yet, while the work of establishing institutions of public education fell principally to the states and communities, the Union organized by the founders was continued and furnished the institutional frame in which economy was being nationalized even while particularism seemed triumphant.

### III.

#### DEMOCRACY AND INDIVIDUALISM PROVIDED THE CONTEXT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

TAKEN as a whole the age which opened with the advent of Jackson was characterized by an intense reaction against the cultural outlook of Washington, Madison, Jefferson, and John Quincy Adams. This reaction culminated in a conception that America was not a nation at all, but an aggregation of sovereign states, any one of which could legally withdraw from the Union at its pleasure. Associated with it, as a matter of course, was the repudiation of the idea that the government of the United States should be employed in promoting agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and internal improvements; the advancement of science, literature, and the arts; and the development of education. As a corollary, stress was laid on individual liberty in economy, individual equality in democracy, and individual rights against society. This reaction, by its very nature, meant a dispersion of energies, not a concentration such as had carried through the Revolution against Great Britain, the establishment of the Constitution, and the formulation of economic and social policies on a national scale. It was on this tide in American affairs that were floated the philosophy and practice of public education which were to become dominant in later years.

#### *The Industrial Revolution Made Rapid Headway*

In matters of economy, the second period of American history was marked by tendencies that differentiated it from the age of the founders. These may be swiftly summarized: the rapid rise of machine industries, driving handicrafts and small shops to the wall; the growth of corporations in industry, commerce, and finance, bringing new forms of property ownership; the spread of steam transportation in commerce; the

swift upswing of commercial and industrial cities, raising the problem of urban aggregations that had long vexed the Old World; periodical crises in economy such as occurred in 1837, 1846, 1857, and 1873, making acute the uncertainties and insecurities of life; the opening wide of national gates to poverty-stricken immigrants from the Old World; the development of a huge body of industrial workers, with labor organizations, conflicts, and strikes disturbing to social peace; the transformation of slavery from the domestic system of the old days into the capitalistic cotton planting system and finally its destruction in a civil war; the opening of the Near and Far West by farm settlements, with their forms and practices of agrarian democracy; the drive of cotton planting into the Southwest and the extension of the national domain to the Pacific Coast; the alienation of the nation's immense endowment in land and other natural resources into private property, to be exploited by private initiative for private profit without control by the national government. Thus the relatively compact nation of the seaboard was expanded from ocean to ocean, and its economy—industrial and agricultural—revolutionized by events.

### *These New Forces Made for Integration in American Education*

While the dominant political tendency of this period was toward the surrender of authority to the states, social and economic forces far more powerful and permanent in American life were running against this centrifugal movement. In many of the most important phases of local, state, and national affairs, coordinating and integrating influences were rapidly consolidating the people and were making for unity in customs, habits, and interests which were in strong contrast to the highly individualized life of the past. The growth of cities, improvement in transportation and communication, the development of corporate action by both industry and labor and many other evidences of the striking tendency toward group life ended

forever the long period of isolation and made possible effective group action. The collective influence of these mighty forces created a solidarity in American life not to be nullified by any contradictory philosophy, by whatever powerful hands wielded.

The schools were among those institutions and agencies which were affected by the unifying forces of this period. Within a relatively short time, scattered district schools were being welded into state school systems under the leadership of such men as Carter, Mann, and Barnard. In the cities, schools founded by charity and philanthropy were replaced by schools supported and administered by the civil unit and with the stigma of pauperism lifted from those who attended them. Even the frontier, injecting as it did powerful disintegrating influences into national political life, demanded state school systems to provide equality of educational opportunity for its people. At the beginning of the Jacksonian period education for the masses of the people was little more than a hazy ideal of theorists and reformers; by the middle of the century it became an actuality for millions of the people.

### *Equalitarian Democracy Made Swift Gains*

In the sphere of government, the immediate reaction against the "aristocratic" features of the early Republic was intense. The doctrine of equality had been proclaimed by the Declaration of Independence; now it was applied by the extension of the suffrage to white males without distinctions of property in law. Appealing to the logic of the theory, women held their first national suffrage convention in 1848 and launched a campaign for universal suffrage. Observing the trend everywhere in Western civilization, Thomas Carlyle exclaimed: "Universal democracy, whatever we may think of it, has declared itself as an inevitable fact of the days in which we live; and he who has any chance to instruct, or lead, in his day, must begin by admitting that."

With the extension of the suffrage came popular election of presidential electors, the rise of the party nominating conventions, and the wresting of government from the old "aristocracy of wealth and talents." For a more or less permanent public service were substituted rotation in office, short terms, and the spoils system. "The duties of any public office," declared Andrew Jackson, "are so simple or admit of being made so simple that any man can in a short time become master of them." Henceforward, for many years, men who had dwelt in log cabins or humble homes were to occupy the White House so long possessed by gentlemen in powdered wigs and knee breeches.

### *The Functions of the Federal Government Were Curtailed*

Respecting federal economic policies, the upheaval during the opening years of the second period was likewise thoroughgoing. The national bank was destroyed; for it were substituted state banks, with their "wildcat" tendencies. Internal improvements were found to be unconstitutional and this phase of federal activity was slowed down. National aids to commerce and shipping were either curtailed or abandoned. In its platform of 1844 the Democratic party set forth the political science of the membership. It declared that all grants of power in the Constitution "ought to be strictly construed . . . and it is inexpedient and dangerous to exercise doubtful constitutional powers." It proclaimed "an equality of rights and privileges." The federal government should not "foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another." This government has no power to charter a United States bank; such an institution is "dangerous to our republican institutions and the liberties of the people." To crown the system of federal retrenchment, the Democratic party added a resolution in 1856 that the people of the United States should declare themselves in favor of "progressive free trade throughout the world."

*The Triumph of the Republican Party in 1865*  
*Continued the Cultural Tradition of*  
*Jacksonian Democracy*

Although the triumph of the second Republican party and the preservation of the Union in the civil conflict brought a reversal of these policies in many respects, they did not effect a return to the system of the early Republic. That party took for its name the title of Jefferson's party; and its first great leader, Abraham Lincoln, derived ideas and inspiration from the teachings of Jefferson. But America did not recover 1789 in the victory of 1865. Popular suffrage remained and was widened; the political practices of democracy, including the spoils system, were continued; the ideal of universal equality was strengthened by the abolition of chattel slavery.

While renewing the patronage of industry, commerce, and agriculture by federal action, national leadership continued the policy of transforming national resources into private property—with swiftness and prodigality. It deplored all federal intervention with economy, save that designed to promote active interests. At the same time, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, restricted social legislation in the states by curtailing their police power. If, as sometimes contended, leadership in the second half of the nineteenth century combined the Federalism of Washington with the Democracy of Jefferson, it certainly did not display the whole cultural outlook of these national statesmen; nor did it accord to education the role in civilization accepted by Washington, Jefferson, and John Quincy Adams.

*No National Statesman Assumed*  
*Leadership in Education*

After the close of John Quincy Adams' administration no great leader in national affairs looked all around education, plumbed its depths, considered its relation to the nation, and, like Washington, Jefferson, and John Quincy Adams, staked



his reputation upon urging its promotion in every department—from elementary instruction to the highest inquiry and research. General tributes were paid to education by national statesmen, aspects of it were touched upon, and money was voted for its support. But exploration of its relation to government, economy, and civilization was neglected by the directors of federal affairs after that time. Nor did leaders of great private affairs dedicate high talents and powers of mind to this subject. They too offered praise to education and generously poured out millions for private endowments. Occasionally they lauded, if pleased; and protested if displeased; but where in their writings, addresses, and testaments did they display anything like Washington's or Jefferson's encompassing and penetrating grasp of the thought, activities, and expositions which they endowed?

In keeping with the ascendant conceptions of the age, leadership in educational advocacy, surrendered by presidents and national statesmen, was carried forward by private citizens, local statesmen, and especially professional educators. The break with the past was not absolute, of course; but the emphasis was different and other conceptions of society, government, and public policy prevailed generally. The age was also marked for a time by preoccupation with the civil conflict, and then with the exploitation of the continental domain, under different auspices and yet under Jacksonian theories of public policy, especially with respect to the disposition of natural resources, the obligations of government, and the nature of its social responsibilities.

It is true that Congress passed in 1862 the Morrill Act, granting land for the establishment of colleges by the states, and later subsidized agricultural experiment stations; that the Department of Education, soon reduced to the status of a Bureau, was set up in 1867; and that President Ulysses S. Grant renewed the old recommendation of a national university in his message of 1873. Still these events, however important in themselves, were incidents, not primary concerns, in national

politics. Education continued to be entrusted to local inspiration, leadership, and control.

*The Idea of Political and Economic Individualism  
Was Accepted as an Automatic Guarantee  
of Progress and Order*

In turning from the features of economy and politics to the general ideas uppermost in this period, we encounter complexities more difficult to summarize. Yet in the long perspective we can discern certain dominant ideas amid the tumult and conflict. Perhaps first among them must be placed the idea of complete equality for all individuals in government, economy, and cultural opportunity. With a growing insistence this idea rang through the thought of the age. Coupled with it was a conception of social policy deemed essential to the realization of equality in opportunity. That conception called for "giving everybody a chance" to acquire fame and fortune, for the transformation of the national domain into private property, and for emphasis on individual initiative and liberty in the use of property—with government or collective action reduced to the minimum. It embraced what John R. Commons calls the "mechanical principles of individualism, selfishness, division of labor, exchange of commodities, equality, fluidity, liberty, and that divine providence which led individuals to benefit each other without intending to do so." That the new social policy was a driving influence in the extraordinary development of the material resources of the nation can scarcely be controverted. That it appeared to be then the final word in statecraft is not surprising to students of intellectual history.

The ruling conception of the time, ascribed with some disregard for truth to Thomas Jefferson, was succinctly and appropriately stated in 1860 by James Parton, the biographer of Andrew Jackson. According to the new creed: "the office of government is solely to maintain justice between man and man, and between the nation and other nations. It should have nothing to do with carrying letters, supporting schools, digging

canals, constructing railroads, or establishing scientific institutions. Its business is simply to suppress villains, foreign and domestic. The people are to be left absolutely free to work out their welfare in their own way. . . . Paternal government establishes and supports schools; Jeffersonian government ordains (or should) that no ignoramus shall vote, and sees to it (or should) that no parent, guardian, or master *defrauds* a child, ward, or apprentice of the means of acquiring knowledge. . . . This theory of government, incompletely set forth in the writings of Mr. Jefferson, has been recently elaborated with singular lucidness and power by an English author, Mr. Herbert Spencer, whose work on 'Social Statics' Mr. Jefferson ought to have lived long enough to read, such keen delight would he have had in seeing his cherished opinion stated with the clearness of light, and demonstrated as Euclid demonstrates propositions in geometry." This is the system which Carlyle characterized as anarchy plus the police constable. That it was often violated in practice by Jacksonian democracy, and later by other national measures, is evident in the records of history; but it was long a prominent characteristic of American thought and life.

### *Darwinism Fortified the Idea of Individual Struggle for Existence*

Powerfully affecting the thought of the age was the idea of natural science, theoretical and applied. It was, in brief, the idea that the material world, and, to some extent at least, human affairs, are governed by immutable laws which can be revealed by research and employed to effect human purposes. Among the many findings reported in the name of science in this period was one which fortified the prevailing conception of social policy, namely, the theory of the struggle for existence, associated with Darwinism. Although one-sided in its emphasis and oblivious to other factors in the evolution of the species, such as mutual aid, it was added to the formulas of politics and economics and seemed to lend the sanction of all

nature to a tooth and claw struggle of individuals for wealth and position. In the hands of Herbert Spencer, and as popularized in the United States by John Fiske, it lent intellectual, if not moral, support to dominant conceptions of economy, government, and social policy in general.

*Yet the Evils of Poverty Shadow  
the March of Progress*

Nevertheless, it could not be said that contentment with the course of affairs in the United States during these long years was universal. Far from it. Coupled all along with praise for the acts of the times were dissatisfactions and aspirations coming under the broad head of social reform and manifesting themselves in third parties and rifts in the major parties. Even before the advent of Jacksonian democracy, and certainly after the financial crash of 1837, observers of American society called attention, with increasing reiteration, not only to slavery in the South but to poverty and degradation in the industrial regions of the North. It was not merely in the writings of agitators deemed radical, such as Josiah Warren, Frances Wright, and Wendell Phillips, that this concern with distress and poverty appeared. Great leaders of American thought—for example, Emerson, Horace Greeley, Charles A. Dana, and James Russell Lowell—were deeply moved by the human degradation that accompanied “the march of progress.”

As remedies for the evils discovered, numerous panaceas were offered to the public. In the early days of the Jacksonian epoch, the project of utopian socialism, or cooperative colonies, was powerfully sponsored by leading personalities, among them Horace Greeley. When repeated failures damped their ardors and hopes, the reformers offered two other methods of coping with poverty and degradation, as ways of escape and as promises of security and liberty. One of them was the plan of the agrarians for giving away the public domain as free homesteads to settlers. This, it was argued, would enable the distressed to find liberty and a living on the land and permit those who remained

behind to raise their wages by threats of wholesale emigration to the West. Into this movement for land reform, utopian socialists and labor leaders finally threw great energies and won from Congress the Homestead Act of 1862. The other grand project for eliminating the poverty and wretchedness that haunted American society was public education.

## IV.

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY WAS ADAPTED TO THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

SUCH were relevant circumstances in which public education, largely a hope in the early days of the Republic, took on its philosophy and practice, and flowered into a state system, with regional connections and outlook. Such was the general context of ideas and interests in which Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, Mary Lyon, Emma Willard, Calvin Wiley, J. L. M. Curry, William T. Harris, and a veritable host of American citizens formulated the theory and built up the institutions of public education in the states, with achievements to their credit little short of the seven wonders of the world. It was not in a shadowy realm of abstractions that they wrought. As the hand is subdued to the dye in which it works, so their minds and aspirations were conditioned by the essential concerns of the age in which their lot was cast.

That the dominant ideas and interests of the time entered into the formulation of the conceptions and objectives of education is shown by Curti.<sup>1</sup> Among these conceptions and objectives a few stand out impressively. An analysis and classification of them are necessary to a comprehension of the educational system which the early leaders created and bequeathed to posterity—the system in which our generation has worked. Professor Curti does not say that a single pattern of thought existed in identical form in the minds of all leaders who took part in founding and developing public schools. Some leaders emphasized one aspect; others laid their main stress elsewhere. But when their patterns of thought are laid on top of one

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<sup>1</sup> Curti, Merle. *The Social Ideas of American Educators*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935. 613 p.

another, certain centers of interest correspond, despite differences and shadings.

*Education Was Conceived as an Aid  
in Sustaining Democratic Government*

Without making a hazardous attempt to arrange them in order of historical importance, we may begin with the emphasis on public education as a promise for the fulfilment of the democratic ideal, as an instrument for making democratic government adequate to the exigencies of society, and as a corrective for the "evils" of the wider democracy brought about by the extension of the suffrage in Jacksonian days. At last the decision on momentous questions that had long vexed mankind was entrusted to masses of the people, and Horace Mann offered public education as the supreme hope for wise and just decisions. "The rack, the faggot, and the dungeon," he said, had failed to decide them; "the blood of all the martyrs" had failed; "the power of kings aided by the wealth of nations" had failed. If these issues were ever to be correctly settled, Mann thought, "it must be by each party's laying aside its exclusiveness, its pride, its infallibility, its contempt, and, by the union of all in some noble plan, to give to another generation fitter attainments, greater capacities, and that without which all other means are worthless—minds free from prejudice, and yearning after truth."

Yet there were dangers in the popular experiment. Masses of propertyless white men were given the vote and the right to hold office. This was a break with history, with the conceptions and practices of the men who founded the American Republic. In a sense it was, as contended by the opponents at the time, revolutionary in nature and import. In opposing a system of complete political equality, Daniel Webster, as a member of the Massachusetts constitutional convention of 1820, warned his auditors that political equality and economic inequality were incompatible; that political equality would bring assaults

on private property, or compel "the holders of estates" to limit the right of suffrage. It was with some such warnings in mind that Horace Mann, successor of John Quincy Adams in the House of Representatives, "turned to universal education as the best insurance against mobocracy, confiscatory legislation, threats to judicial supremacy, and the spoils system which Jacksonism held so dear." Public education, it was repeatedly argued, would develop good citizens, calm popular distempers, and make the success of democracy possible.

*The Assimilation of Aliens Was Made  
a Function of Education*

A second function assigned to public education by the leaders was the assimilation of the aliens who poured into the country, as growing industries and the development of agriculture opened the way for them. The thin stream of early republican days became a flood at the middle of the nineteenth century, and a torrent at the close. Men, women, and children of many races, usually poverty-stricken, uneducated, speaking a babel of tongues, imbued with other traditions, streamed into the United States by the millions. Owners of mines, factories, and industries welcomed them; land speculators greeted them with effusion. Many of the immigrants crowded into urban areas; ethnic groups formed cities of their own within cities, and preserved a separatism on which politicians and demagogues played in their struggle for power. As historians were fond of pointing out, the invasions which disrupted the Roman Empire were relatively trivial in point of numbers. To public education was assigned the Herculean task of teaching immigrants the English language, preparing them for crafts and callings in the United States, and instructing them in respect of the spirit and practices of American institutions. The fact that some European authorities were deliberately emptying their poorhouses on our shores gave to this argument for education a point which could scarcely be missed.



### *Education Was Regarded as an Aid in Assuring Equality of Preparation for Economic Opportunity*

Within the policy set for government and economy, the public schools were also to prepare boys and girls for making the most of their opportunities, for rising in the world to positions of wealth and influence. American democracy had proclaimed equality, had asserted the right of every individual to advance as far as his talents could carry him, and had thrown open the public domain to swift and unrestricted exploitation. An apparently obvious corollary of this policy was the equalization of opportunities for all to acquire the knowledge and training required for the race in which victory went to talents, as distinguished from the privileges of birth. On this aspect of public education, organized labor laid heavy emphasis, early and late. It demanded public support for education, to remove the stigma of pauperism which marked many of the charity schools. It opposed mere manual training, as designed to fix class lines, and insisted upon a system of education that would provide "ladders" to the highest and most lucrative places in the country. If America was to be regarded as "the land of opportunity," if opportunities were to be "equal," then education must provide "the equal start."

### *The Undeveloped Resources of the Nation Seemed To Offer Endless Economic Opportunity*

The logic of the plan seemed overwhelming. Circumstances seemed propitious for its application. American industries were young and no one could set limits to their expansion. American agriculture had a continental domain to conquer. Debaters in Congress pointed out as late as 1852 that, in the preceding sixty years, only 100,000,000 acres of the public land had been sold, and that 1,400,000,000 remained in the hands of the national government. From such figures the conclusion was drawn that it would take from four hundred to nine hundred years, at the existing rate of sale, to reach the end. With such a pleasing

economic prospect spread out before them, the sponsors of public education could with good reason proclaim opportunity; committed to the principle of equality for all, they could plead for equal educational facilities.

### *Education Set to Work within the Frame of a Noble Dream*

By inculcating loyalty to the democratic order, by the training of citizens, by the assimilation of aliens, and by the equalization of educational opportunities, founders of the public schools hoped to realize in America a noble social dream with liberty, justice, and welfare for all. In this society careers were to be open to everybody, talents were to be efficiently applied in the exploitation of the national endowment and the production of wealth, and the blessings of civilization were to be shared by all. If the initiative of individuals could be given liberty, if they could be equipped with knowledge of the practical arts, then there would be prosperity and security for American society in the years to come. So thought Horace Mann. Oppressed by the economic misery which he saw about him, Mann was inspired to passionate labor in behalf of education as a hope for an escape from poverty. Henry Barnard and Catherine Beecher were no less haunted by the spectre; and they likewise looked to public education as the means of laying it forever.

### *Public Education Forged Ahead*

Driven by the dynamics of these powerful considerations, public education made headway against popular indifference and privileged hostility, from small beginnings to magnificence of resources and vastness of plant. Heirs and followers of this tradition accepted its assumptions, worked within its boundaries, devised new methods for achieving the original purposes, and appeared to expect an endless expansion.

There were doubters, to be sure. Horace Greeley, the inveterate reformer, bluntly asked: "To the child daily sent out from

a rickety hovel or miserable garret to wrestle with Poverty and Misery for such knowledge as the teacher can impart, what true idea or purpose of Education is possible?" But even Greeley came to regard free homesteads as the escape from poverty, and in the end conceded the point of the educators. By this combination America could be made the land of opportunity; through equal education the children of landless farmers, poverty-stricken immigrants, and city slum dwellers might find their way outward, if not upward, into security, perhaps affluence.

## V.

### NEW INTERESTS AND IDEAS DEMAND EDUCATIONAL READJUSTMENTS

THUS far the popular institutions of government founded in the eighteenth century, and widened into the democracy of Jackson and Lincoln, have survived. Indeed they have been extended, by the emancipation of slaves, the partial enfranchisement of Negroes, and the addition of woman suffrage. Moreover, other institutions of democracy, such as initiative, referendum, recall, and direct primary, have been grafted on the original stock.

The few and simple functions of government prevailing in the early period—the functions of “the police state”—have been supplemented by functions bewildering in variety—social services undreamt of, save by a few, at the middle of the nineteenth century. A mere description of them fills volumes.<sup>1</sup> So, with the growth of political democracy, the obligations of popular government underwent a revolution.

#### *Over Free Land Sweeps Tenancy*

What became, however, of the “free land” and “unlimited resources” which were to furnish opportunities for security and a livelihood—for four hundred or nine hundred years? By 1890, that fictitious year which marked “the closing of the frontier,” practically all the good arable land available to homesteaders had been granted away, and the rest of the free land open to settlement was of low quality. By that fateful year “only 372,659 homestead entries had been perfected, granting

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<sup>1</sup> President's Research Committee, Wesley C. Mitchell, chairman. *Recent Social Trends in the United States*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933. 2 vols. ¶Woody, Carroll H. *Growth of the Federal Government, 1915-1932*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1934. 577 p.

48,225,736 acres to supposed settlers—an area less than that of the state of Nebraska and equal only to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  percent of the total territory west of the Mississippi River. By that date more than four times as much land had been given to the railroad companies.” Between 1870 and 1890, “as the population increased  $63\frac{1}{2}$  percent, manufacturing labor more than doubled in number while the total engaged in agriculture grew by only about 45 percent.” Surveying the state of things at the end of that period, “the Industrial Commission accounted for 8,395,634 persons engaged in agriculture in 1890, of whom 3,004,061 were hired laborers. In addition there were no less than 1,500,000 tenant workmen. This leaves less than 4,000,000 persons tilling land of their own, including all the mortgaged farms. Only three-eighths of the families of the United States were cultivating the soil ‘as owners, tenants, or laborers,’ and the ratio was declining constantly. Over half of these were on an economic basis scarcely if any better than that of the city laborer.”<sup>1</sup> The fortunes of farmers, tenants, share croppers, field laborers, and migratory agricultural laborers after 1890 need no recapitulation here. The cumulative effects are recorded in the census returns in pitiless figures, revealing cultural implications that reach the very depths of American life. School graduates by the millions can no longer look forward to free homesteads on which to apply their talents and energies.

### *The Call for Conservation Checks the Rush of Unrestrained Exploitation*

Within fifty years after they were made, prophecies of opportunities in agriculture for four hundred or nine hundred years were belied by events. There was no more free arable land of real quality. Nearly all the best forest, mineral, and grazing land had been alienated for exploitation by private enterprise. By that time the government of the United States was turning its back upon its historic policies, as indicated by

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<sup>1</sup> Shannon, Fred A. “The Homestead Act and the Labor Surplus,” *American Historical Review* 41:637-51; July 1936.

the enactment of 1891 which provided for the creation of forest reserves on the remaining public domain. Now, in our day, the government has been called upon by a half-frantic people to irrigate deserts, to protect whole regions against the floods that descend from denuded hills, to reforest slashed and ruined acres by the million, to restore to grass millions of acres that never should have been given to the plough, to do battle with dust storms, and to resettle beaten and destitute farming families that sought opportunity in the West. *Each* farmer, as Adam Smith might say, knew best what to do with his land; but he could not forecast distant results after *all* farmers had long followed their immediate interests—had drained swamps, cut down trees, and lowered water levels for regions vast in expanse; nor did he know the effect of his own output in the market on which his prices and standard of life depended. After a comprehensive survey of the tendency of things in the use of our natural resources, the engineers of the National Resources Board set forth in cold realism, in 1935, the ruinous prospects of land and water resources, unless historic practices are discontinued.

### *Corporate Ownership Overshadows Individual Ownership in Industry*

During the long period in which educational philosophy and the public schools were taking form and developing, profound changes were occurring in industrial organization and procedure—in that world of economic opportunities for which the schools were training millions of pupils annually. In the production of staple commodities, the small local plant individually or corporately owned, and operated by a small number of employees, gave way to the gigantic plant or system of plants corporately owned and employing thousands of workers. By 1930 corporations owned and controlled approximately 78 percent of American business wealth, and two hundred of the largest corporations owned and controlled about 38 per-

cent of all business wealth. In substance this corporate development made a revolution in the types of industrial opportunities and practices prevailing when public education was established. It marked a large-scale transfer of individual ownership from real property to paper, the creation of heavy fiduciary obligations, a thoroughgoing alteration in the working relations of employers and employees, and the imposition of new restraints on possibilities of rising into the ownership and managements of real property.

### *Local Economies Are Tied into National Economy*

Accompanying this growth of corporate ownership and management was a specialization of industry and agriculture by commodities, regions, and groups. For diversified local factories that supplied nearly all community wants were substituted specialized industries relying upon national and international markets for survival and prosperity. For the self-sufficing homestead was substituted the one-crop system—the dairy farm, the wheat farm, the cattle ranch, or the fruit and vegetable farm. Inevitably there was a corresponding growth of interstate commerce and interdependence among regions, industries, and occupations. Associated with this growth came an integration of specialized industries through industrial corporations and supercorporations, investment concerns, banking institutions, and holding companies—in spite of the anti-trust laws designed to restore the forms of early economy. Thus in effect, industry and agriculture were nationalized in operation and interdependence; wages, hours, and working conditions in each region affected wages, hours, and working conditions in all regions; and the national consequences of panics or dislocations in economy were intensified. It became scarcely possible for any section or staple industry to enjoy prosperity and provide full employment while other sections or industries were in a state of depression.

### *Individuals in Economy Are Organized in Associations*

Interwoven with these changes in economic practice was the organization of participants in production, within industry and outside—manufacturers, industrial workers and farmers. Owners and managers of productive and distributive establishments were associated immediately by specialties—manufacturers of electrical supplies and retail merchants, for example; and they were affiliated vertically and horizontally through local, state, and national associations and chambers of commerce. In the field of labor a similar process of organization occurred, until the major portion of the workers in large staple enterprises were organized in independent and company unions. Less effectively, but still on a considerable scale, especially with state and federal assistance, agricultural producers were drawn together in cooperative marketing and credit associations, local and nationwide in scope. No comprehensive figures are available, but it is safe to say that only in isolated and special cases do individuals in the productive and distributive processes stand alone, unaffiliated with any economic association, and completely free to determine their own working rules and to dictate the terms of their own contracts or managerial operations. And steadily through the years have been developed codes of fair practices limiting the range and types of individual activities and opportunities that prevailed when the philosophy of public education was first formulated.

### *Family Economy Is Disintegrating*

No less significant for national culture, for the fortunes of individuals, and for education, was the loosening of the family bonds that existed when industry and agriculture were localized and more or less self-sufficing. For centuries the household had been the center of education in the practical arts and the humanities—a school of mutual aid and the social virtues indispensable to the state. However intense the struggle for exist-



ence, mutual aid, collective responsibility, and individual sacrifice had marked the economy of the family. It was not without reason that Aristotle, writing long before the birth of Christ, started his immortal treatise on *Politics* with a consideration of the domestic unit, for, he said, "The family is the association established by nature for the supply of men's everyday wants, and the members of it are called by Charandas 'companions of the cupboard' and by Epimendes the Cretan 'companions of the manger.'" Nor is it to be overlooked that the very term "economics" is derived from the Greek word meaning "the management of household affairs."

As long as the family was self-sufficing and intact, its members assumed responsibilities for education and group welfare, according to capacity; they shared food, clothing, and shelter; they perished together in floods, droughts, famines, and wars. But when machines and industrial specialization disintegrated the household and destroyed the homestead arts, they drew members of the domestic unit, young and old, into factories and other enterprises beyond the hearth. Although the family remained, its ancient economic ties were broken. Often the "fluidity of labor" enabled its members to escape entirely from home and from responsibilities; in millions of cases, even the mothers, from primitive times guardians of the household arts and sacrificial conservators of family goods became wage-earners in shops, factories, and offices. Hence old reliance upon the family as a guarantee of security and as a generator of moral forces steadily weakened. Long ago educational administration felt the shock of this transformation. A restatement of educational obligations must reckon with its relevant facts.

### *The Functions of Government Touch All Branches of Life and Economy*

With the mechanization of economy and the loosening of the family bonds ran the multiplication of government functions and services, to which brief reference has been made.

These functions now touch every branch of industry, agriculture, finance, the management of natural resources, employment, morals, and security. They go far beyond the crude protection of life and property. Some are regulatory—factory legislation, control of utilities, and rules pertaining to industries affected with public interest. Other public functions are stimulative—tariffs, subsidies, bounties, and government purchasing and lending. In certain fields government has entered operating economy—the Panama Canal, the Tennessee Valley development, parcel post, postal savings, water works, parks, forests, docks, harbor facilities. In many relations government cooperates with private enterprise—the Boulder Dam power project, the New York subway system, and rural electrification (grid projects). With disintegration of town and village sufficiency, with the merging of the family and the community into a specialized and integrated economy, governments—federal, state, and local—assumed social obligations on a huge scale: institutional care, old age pensions, and insurance against dependency and unemployment.

### *The Growth of Public Functions Is Cumulative*

The origins of the expansion in public functions may be traced back into the nineteenth century, and in some cases, beyond. Its municipal manifestations reached a high point by 1914; its state forms, in many respects, ran parallel and widened as the nineteenth century merged into the twentieth; federal functions, in some features, date from the adoption of the Constitution but, in their proliferation, mark the advance of the twentieth century. The revolutionary character of the contrast is sharply illustrated by a comparison of President Van Buren's refusal to lift a finger in the panic of 1837 with the assumption of heavy obligations by President Hoover in the crisis of 1929, and still heavier obligations by President Roosevelt in 1933.

### *It Is Not the Work of Any Single Political Party*

This growth of public functions has been a process of accretion and accumulation. No political party has deliberately and consistently favored it. No political party in practice has deliberately and consistently opposed it. A study of the votes in state legislatures and in the Congress of the United States shows that on most of the measures adding to public obligations political parties have themselves been divided. The benefits, therefore, cannot be ascribed to any party; nor the evils. Indeed the growth of public functions has gone on despite the fortunes of parties and leaders. With something like the inexorableness of a natural process, it has accompanied the development of American society over a long period of time, gaining momentum as the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth. Critics may condemn; admirers may praise. The fact remains. And even the severest critics make discriminations; they would preserve some of these functions while abandoning others.

### *No Sharp Line Divides Public and Private Economy*

So deeply embedded in the texture of economy and social life are these government functions that no sharp line divides public and private economy. Theory may draw it in words; practice and knowledge cannot discover it in the conduct of affairs. Thus a transformation in the very structure of American society must be recorded since the establishment of educational philosophy and practice in the age of Jacksonian democracy. At the opening of that period American society was relatively simple. With slight sacrifice of truth it could be said that it was actually governed by Adam Smith's "mechanical principles." (See page 30.) In our age, on the other hand, society is a complication of individual activities and social relations. The individual remains, and individual virtues are still indispensable. But all individuals must in cold fact operate their

economies and conduct their lives under what John R. Commons calls "the Working Rules of Going Concerns, taking many forms and names, such as the common law, statute law, shop rules, business ethics, business methods, norms of conduct, and so on, which these governing or regulating groups of associated individuals have laid down for guidance of transactions." If anything is known about the actual nature of human affairs and human relations, this much is known: All educational philosophies and activities designed to prepare pupils for the real world of going concerns must take account of it and cope with its thrusts and demands. Failure to do so means an avoidance of truth as well as of obligations.

### *The Scientific Method Dissolves Old Social Dogmas*

The validity of what has just been said rests upon another positive development that has taken place since the advent of Jacksonian democracy and the early formulations of educational philosophy, namely, the wide application of the scientific method to the study of human affairs. In essence the application of the scientific method means the utmost possible emancipation from the dictates of a priori or dogmatic notions, whether of theological revelation, Colbertian mercantilism, Ricardian individualism, or Marxian communism. Correlatively it means an effort to know things as they have been and now are, without reference to preconceived dogmas respecting the way they ought to have been and to be. In short, the scientific method fostered by learning brought the keen edge of analysis to bear on the habitual assumptions of the period which saw the establishment of public education.

### *The Social Sciences Present Huge Bodies of New Knowledge*

Without doubt those who apply the scientific method are human and subject to error, but by employing engines of

authentication and cross-verification they have created immense bodies of knowledge which command authority through the consensus of competence. The fruits of their labors are represented by whole libraries of works written since the age of Andrew Jackson—critical and documented history, anthropology, political economy, political science, sociology, psychology, and institutional behavior. Despite all conflicts in social theory and many shortcomings in presentation, these branches of knowledge are so solidly established that theorists and practitioners in government, economy, social relations, and education are compelled to use them, unless content to be futile or utopian. Although the social sciences have not attained, and in the nature of things cannot attain, the exactness of generalization reached by the physical sciences, they are as indispensable to efficient individual conduct and social practice as technology is to machine industry; and reliance on them will increase as society grapples resolutely with its problems and potentialities.

### *These Transformations Provide a Novel Setting for Educational Planning*

It is evident from this summary that the movement of interests and ideas has created for educational philosophy and practice a social context which is fundamentally different in many respects from the setting in which the founders of the public schools worked. American society is no longer a fairly simple order of agriculture and manufacturing, in which prudence, talents, industry, and thrift are automatically assured places and achievements. It is instead a highly complicated association controlled by a close mechanism of working rules, public and private, which must be effectively observed to assure anything like an adequate functioning of either economy or government. The opportunities and responsibilities of the individual in this society are correspondingly complex. Coping with them calls for specialized knowledge, and for a strong spirit of goodwill. Simple confidence in the assertion of rights against society,

which characterized the nineteenth century, is no longer sufficient. It is now everywhere recognized that rights asserted are futile unless accompanied by the policy and the competence necessary to maintain the kind of society in which rights proclaimed can be enjoyed.

*The Task of Recasting Educational Philosophy in  
New Terms Falls on Educational Leadership*

Such being the case, it follows that American society is not one in which the problems of government, economy, and social living have been solved for all time, leaving to education the simple function of disseminating fixed doctrines and the knowledge of the practical arts—or of serving the authorities immediately in power. On the contrary, it is a society which confronts basic issues at home and in foreign relations, even the fundamental issue of preserving the democratic processes themselves. In such a society education has creative as well as conservative functions and obligations of the highest order.

If it is said that education must merely follow the State, then the question arises, What is the State? The President of the United States at the moment? The majority in Congress? The majority in the state legislature or the city council? The governor or the mayor? Directors of farm organizations, trade unions, chambers of commerce, or any minority that can exert pressure on the schools?

This question surely answers itself, at least for all who are not prepared to throw overboard the cultural obligations of education and accept the dictation of immediate political officers or special interests. To be sure educational leadership does not and cannot ignore other forms of leadership in American society; nor does it arrogate to itself infallibility, even within its own sphere. But the functions of education in maintaining and enriching civilization distinguish it from instant political and economic activities, and impose upon it responsibilities that are wider and deeper than any mere professional concern.

Those responsibilities are difficult to know and discharge. That goes without saying. But loyalty to the knowledge and aspiration associated with education requires an exploration and definition of its obligations, with all the powers of mind and understanding available. Belittling our capacities in the presence of duty, as John Morley said long ago, is as indefensible as fostering an unwarranted egotism.

### *Summary of the Background*

Public education is anchored in the nature of civilization as unfolded. It is thus closely associated with the ideals, policies, and institutions of government and economy, as well as the arts and sciences. Although some forms of private education may be far removed from the hard world of practice, public education can maintain no such isolation. Many professional representatives, it is true, may properly concentrate on school-room procedure, methods, and testing, but the leaders who determine the content and objectives of instruction must work under the immediate impacts of society—its needs, drives, and demands. The degree to which these constructive organizers are aware of, and informed respecting, the historical and contemporary forces pressing upon the schools, may be said to mark the state of their preparation for effective leadership.

Distinguished founders of the Republic deemed education indispensable to the perpetuity of the nation, to the realization of its ideals, and to the smooth functioning of American society. Under the impetus of this deep conviction, they explored the nature of education, made plans, and urged the establishment of institutions of learning appropriate to the American setting. Having waged war in a common cause, having established a Constitution to form a more perfect union, they laid heavy emphasis on the utility of education in overcoming the disruptive tendencies of particularism and preparing the people for the discharge of national obligations. In so doing they displayed profound insight into the forces requi-

site to the creation and operation of a great society. They did more. They set an impressive example to all those of succeeding generations who are called upon to make constructive efforts in education on a large scale and under grand conceptions of public policy. They demonstrated for all time that education is an enterprise worthy of the highest talents, inviting the boldest thought, and forever linked with the cultural destiny of the nation.

In the second period of American development public education was deemed no less important. Indeed it was so highly esteemed that immense sacrifices were made to secure its establishment. But this period was marked by an intense reaction against the cultural outlook of the founders, by emphasis on the sovereignty of the states, by *laissez faire* in federal policy, by the march of equalitarian democracy, and by a passionate individualism. Not until the close of the civil conflict in 1865 was it clearly decided that the Union could survive the action of these centrifugal forces. In other words, the second stage in the growth of American society presented many aspects of a sharp antithesis to the first; and they were stamped on educational theory and practice.

Yet the antithesis did not wholly prevail. The unity of the nation was preserved, as the founders of the Republic had hoped. But it was democratized, in a way which few of them contemplated. Liberty was widened by the abolition of slavery. A profound stimulus was given to individual enterprise, as education equalized opportunity for training. And by a strange fate the energies of individual enterprise thus trained in schools under state and local auspices, and released in action, swiftly rounded out the continent, laced all parts of the country together by systems of transportation, and bound its sections and industries into a national economy. Meanwhile agencies of communication merged provincial ideas and thought in a larger consensus, such as the founders of the Republic had sought to create.

So it has come about that public education, as in 1789, is



once more concerned with national economy and interests, despite its origins in state and local enterprise. Whereas George Washington once urged the promotion of education by national action, states and communities now turn to the federal government for aid in carrying on the work which they insisted upon starting under their own control. Through the influence of common ideals, methods, and associations, public education itself draws into a unity of thought and purpose which is nationwide in its reach. Even in the most independent communities the impacts of national economy are felt; and the social studies which the schools teach are of necessity deeply concerned with that economy. The age-long conflict between centralism and particularism, between collective interest and private interest, has not closed and cannot be closed; but upon educational leadership devolves a certain responsibility for keeping that conflict within the bounds of exact knowledge, goodwill, and the democratic process, and of contributing to the formulation of wise and humane decisions.

So viewed, the association of educational history with the encompassing history of American civilization is not a form of antiquarianism and dust-sifting. On the contrary by this process alone does it seem possible to obtain sure guidance in the formulation of an educational policy corresponding to the realities of the living present, now rising out of the past.

## VI.

### THE NATURE OF EDUCATION AND ITS OBLIGATIONS

WHEN all that is associated with education as philosophy and reality is brought under review, it presents two phases which, though inseparable, may be called for convenience *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*. While education constantly touches the practical affairs of the hour and day, and responds to political and economic exigencies, it has its own treasures heavy with the thought and sacrifices of the centuries. It possesses a heritage of knowledge and heroic examples—accepted values stamped with the seal of permanence. Yet it is more than the inanimate record of tradition, more than books, maps, pictures, models, and methods of instruction. Education finds expression in the living personalities connected with it, in the relations of board and administration, in the associations of teachers and pupils, in attitudes, bearings, and skills, in all the nobler impulses of the humanities which are sustaining forces of society. Forever affiliated with education, in varying degrees of intensity, is the inscrutable urge of aspiration and creative intelligence which gives elevation to daily duties and seeks the improvement of the heritage. It guards those virtues of the race that are vouchsafed to the humblest—industry, patience, self-denial, and consideration for others, and at the same time it stimulates the more imperial gifts of imagination, originality, and invention by which the treasures of mankind are enlarged and enriched. Wielding no weapons of sheer power, claiming no pomp and circumstance of State, education nourishes the underlying values upon which State and Society depend for their existence—values which outlast transformations in the working rules of government and economy, and offer promises of humane reconstruction in times of crisis and threatened dissolution.

Beyond question, the members of the teaching profession do not claim to be adequately prepared by natural talents or by training for the weighty tasks imposed upon them by education. Nor does any Hippocratic oath bind them into a single fraternity committed with whole heart to the ideals of their own heritage. But even an elementary knowledge of the history of education, from crude drawings on the walls of paleolithic caves to the complicated activities of the modern university, vests in them a fiduciary trust meritorious in itself and to be protected against mere coercion and expediency. This trust remains a center of interest and affection when that aspect of education, called extrinsic, is drawn into consideration and the obligations of the schools to government, economy, and society are determined and assumed.

### *The Intrinsic Features of Education*

No sharp line can be traced between the inmost substances of education and the external circumstances that influence it and call upon its leadership for services. Yet there is a center of gravity in education—a treasury of knowledge, aspirations, and values—that endures and is to be cherished against mere expediency. This heritage is old in its origins and still ever new in contemporaneous thought. It contains some features peculiar to America and some that are common to education in all ages and all countries, however carried on—under domestic, private, religious, independent, or public auspices. These features are indeed primordial for civilization. They represent values which the sponsors of democracy from antiquity to modern times have deemed essential to humane living and to effective self-government.

This is no place to attempt a distillation of forty centuries of educational thought and aspiration, even were the powers to undertake it at command. But stress must be laid on the intrinsic and enduring features of education. Otherwise they may be neglected amid the pressures of immediate demands

upon the schools; and encouragement may be given to the menacing conception that education is nothing in itself, is a mere servant of triumphant power—political, military, or economic.

It is obvious, and still must be emphasized, that education has obligations attached to the profession. The teacher is not a soldier, a lawyer, a physician, a businessman, a farmer, or an industrial worker. Other callings have their responsibilities. Teaching has the responsibilities of its commitments. In its heritage is knowledge—of the great classics deemed appropriate for instruction in the schools, of educational philosophy from Plato through Rousseau and Froebel to the latest path-breakers, of the scientific works employed in the several branches of learning, and of the technical works on method and practice. It is the duty of teachers, according to their powers, to master as much of this knowledge as they can.

Above all, education has obligations to truth in itself and for its own sake—obligations to seek it, defend it, and make humane use of it. Education must keep alive memories, linking the past with the present and tempering the sensations of the hour by reference to the long experiences of the race. It must kindle and feed the imagination, by bringing past achievements of the imagination into view and indicating how new forms of science, art, invention, and human association may be called into being. Education must foster aspiration—the desire to be more, to acquire greater skill and knowledge, and to create. It must cherish beauty as a value in itself and as contributing to mental health, power, and pleasure, as adding rewards to labor and delight to life. Concerned with truth and the great powers of mind and heart, education is bound to assert the liberty in which they may flourish, to quicken minds, to encourage searching and inventiveness, to employ tolerance and the judicial spirit, to inculcate habits of gentleness and justice. On these considerations education has no monopoly, to be sure, but its intrinsic obligations fall within the broad field thus laid out.

## *Guardians of Educational Values Have Their Professional Obligations*

Protecting and enriching the intrinsic powers of education is a task for all who are concerned with education, whether as teachers, administrators, or lay persons outside the school system. It has been their task since the dawn of civilization, perhaps earlier. There is ground for faith that the task will never be abandoned. The lamps of learning were kindled long ago. They have burned in caves and log cabins, as well as in great buildings erected by wealth and power. We may be sure that no barbarism, new or old, can extinguish them forever. Should society enter upon an age of scorn and neglect, even should the wrath of men tear down the very walls of school buildings, as it burned the library of Alexandria, should one or all these lamps be put out, some hands will rekindle them and will defend them for a better day. While paying due heed to the exigencies of times and occasions, educational leadership true to its trust must continue to uphold the intrinsic values of education.

## *Potentials as Well as Heritage Enter into Consideration*

But a statement of what has been done and is being done by education is not enough. We have before us a body of thought and practice bearing the name of education. That must be examined. We have before us current theory and usage. With them we must be familiar. Still another step must be taken. We do not work in the past or for the mere ends of the present. By the very nature of our obligations, we are compelled to face the future. All planning and action have reference to it. We cannot plan for the past, nor act in it. The public schools are concerned with the coming generations, not with the past and the passing. It is in the years ahead, not in any ages gone, that these generations will live their lives, carry on their work, assert their rights, and discharge their duties.

## *The Program of Education Is Never Completed*

By this conception of education, the very idea of completed formalism and perfect practice handed down by the past is ruled out. Teachers are not pedagogues. They cannot discharge their obligations by saying to pupils: "There is your Virgil; in the corner are the birches; learn your Virgil." Society will not let them rest content with such a procedure, even if they are inclined to do so. Nor are they so inclined. Moved by the ancient command to search out all things under the sun and by the spirit of science to seek new knowledge endlessly, teachers are pioneers, not mere camp followers. Their task is not limited to preserving and passing on a heritage of knowledge and treasured experience; they must take account of advancing knowledge, add to it when they can, sift and create as well as accumulate.

## *It Grows with the Growth of Humanity*

Unless they do this they fall under the dead hand; knowledge will advance without them, in spite of them; and society, finding death, not life, in the schools, will withdraw support. Or perhaps society itself, deriving no nourishment from education and ceasing to grow, will ossify, if not disintegrate. Hence, educators cannot abide by the record alone. It unfolds in their keeping. They too are stirred by the questing spirit, spurred by the examples of the great thinkers and doers whose record they keep, stimulated by the currents of thought in society itself. So moved, they are literally compelled to enlarge their own powers, to enrich their own minds, and ever anew to chart their own obligations. Like the human history in which it is applied, the program of education is never completed. The things that education can do are thus as pressing as the things which it has done and does do. For all we know, until we have tried to the utmost, the work ahead may be more important. Hence any definition of education calls for a con-

sideration of what may be done in its name, as well as what has been done and is now being carried on.

*Its Source Is Life, Not Merely  
Books and Laws*

Experience, the great jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes has said, is the life of the law; no matter how much at times and places formalists seek to bind its trunk and stunt its growth. Having in front of him the written Constitution of the United States and the records telling of its history, another jurist, Thomas M. Cooley, declared: "We may think that we have the Constitution all before us; but for practical purposes the Constitution is that which the government in its several departments and the people in the performance of their duties as citizens recognize and respect as such; and nothing else is. . . . Cervantes says: 'Everyone is the son of his own works.' This is more emphatically true of an instrument of government than it can possibly be of a natural person."

We may have before us all the volumes ever written on the intrinsic features of education, all the great treatises on methods and procedures, all the curriculums, and the relevant statutes, orders, and decrees; yet all of education is not in them. To paraphrase Judge Cooley, education is that which living educators in official positions, and citizens who give their life and thought to the promotion of education, recognize and respect as such. How could it be otherwise? If, as the poet has said, dead but sceptered sovereigns rule us from their tombs, even they rule only through the thought, memories, and aspirations of the living. Education not only preserves and teaches history; it makes history—in some way, large or small, according to the conceptions and powers of the educators.

*Education Embraces Knowledge,  
Training, and Aspiration*

Against such a background, nothing less, must any wide-reaching statement of education for our times be made. Well

aware that there is something arbitrary in all definitions, we may nevertheless make the attempt. The primary business of education, in effecting the promises of American democracy, is to guard, cherish, advance, and make available in the life of coming generations the funded and growing wisdom, knowledge, and aspirations of the race. This involves the dissemination of knowledge, the liberation of minds, the development of skills, the promotion of free inquiries, the encouragement of the creative or inventive spirit, and the establishment of wholesome attitudes toward order and change—all useful in the good life for each person, in the practical arts, and in the maintenance and improvement of American society, as our society, in the world of nations. So conceived, education seems to transcend our poor powers of accomplishment. It does in fact, if perfection be expected; but such is the primary business of public education in the United States; theory supports it; practice inadequately illustrates and confirms it.

### *Knowledge of the Practical and Social Arts*

The knowledge disseminated by the schools has been classified according to a scheme extending from "essentials" to "ornaments." Although fallacious, the classification is convenient for the moment. In the first class come all those subjects of instruction deemed by general consensus to be necessary to the practical arts, namely, reading, writing, arithmetic, and the elements of natural science. These branches of learning are regarded as independent of time, place, and circumstance—above and beyond all partial and partisan interests. In the second class come subjects respecting the "working rules of society" in both public and private aspects. Although they have been divided into rules of government on the one side and rules of private economy on the other—political science and economics—their relations in practice admit of no clean-cut division. Within this class is embraced knowledge of political ideas and institutions, government, liberty, and the processes of democ-



racy—proposal, discussion, adoption, and appraisal. Here falls knowledge of institutions, ideas, and practices, private and public, especially connected with the production and distribution of wealth—using wealth to include material goods and well-being.

*Knowledge of the Funded Wisdom and Aspirations of the Race*

In the third class of knowledge disseminated by the schools are the literature of imagination and aspiration and the so-called fine arts, which are often regarded by the thoughtless as "ornamental." In truth they are not mere refinements of life. They bear upon and are interwoven with all the technical and practical arts supposed to be necessary to the very existence of society. They, no less than the practical arts, serve to distinguish civilization from barbarism. Indeed, it is possible to imagine a society of people well-fed and well-governed, and still devoid of all the knowledge and interests that make human life worth living. Even the maintenance of economy and government depends upon other things than mere technical knowledge and competence. In truth, the distinction between the fine and the practical arts is superficial and unreal; a bolt of cloth, a piece of furniture, and a steel bridge may be designed with a severe eye to use, and in that functional perfection be a superb manifestation of "fine" art.

Without the literature and the arts which keep alive imagination and aspiration, which reflect taste and give enjoyment, industry would be on a low level and government would partake of the culture of the barracks. Without the ethical and esthetic aspirations reflected in the great literature of the race—embodying its funded and accumulating wisdom—government, industry, and even the "fine" arts would be without form, spirit, and force. Uncontrolled by ethics and esthetics, the practical arts may destroy civilization. Apart from them civilization is inconceivable and impossible.

### *The Practical, Social, and "Fine" Arts Are All Essential Parts of Education*

Hence, while the knowledge which the schools disseminate may be classified for convenience into subjects treating of the practical arts, the working rules of society, literature, and the fine arts, as if there were here a scheme of values to be arranged in a hierarchy, the classification and hierarchy are false to reality. All these values are necessary to a civilization, and each is essential to the existence and development of the others. All must be brought within any plan of education designed to disseminate knowledge useful in the practical arts, the good life, and the maintenance and improvement of society. In stating its position, educational leadership, if loyal to its heritage and to the society that sustains the school, must discard the conception of a hierarchy of values and insist on the preservation and advancement of all these branches of knowledge and interest. Any curtailments which economic stringency may require must be proportionately applied.

### *Knowledge Alone Is Not Enough— Ethics Is Indispensable*

In the definition of public education for the United States thus generalized, it is evident, the dissemination of knowledge is not the whole business of education. More elusive elements are included. The nature of the knowledge to be disseminated is qualified by the condition, "useful in the good life and in the maintenance and improvement of American society." Both ethics and the nature of American civilization are drawn into immediate and inescapable consideration. Knowledge alone does not present imperatives of conduct; nor kindle aspiration for the good life; nor necessarily exemplify it. Knowledge of chemistry may be employed to poison a neighbor as well as to heal the sick. Knowledge of banking may be used to exploit and wreck banks as well as in banking practices of unquestioned social advantage. There is nothing in a chemical fact, or in a

financial fact, which necessarily instructs the learner in the right use of it. Commands relative to usage come from other sources—from the funded wisdom and aspirations of the race, whatever elements of expediency may enter into the account. Ethics is, therefore, not a side issue with education as here conceived, but is a central concern—a concern that gives direction to the spread of knowledge. The selection of knowledge to be disseminated and emphasis placed on courses of study are ethical choices, not categorical commands arising solely out of knowledge or out of studies hitherto pursued.

### *Educators Carry Ethical Responsibilities*

The statement that ethics is a fundamental concern of education rests upon the intrinsic heritage of education as well as upon immediate experience. The acknowledged leaders and sponsors of education in all ages have been in fact ethical teachers. Their theories and practices have centered upon enduring good, not upon evil or indifference to evil. Even those leaders of education who have laid emphasis on the scientific method as a correct instrument for securing accurate knowledge concerning matters physical and human have proceeded upon some ethical assumptions, some conceptions of things worth while, either tacit or explicit. No educational leader has ever held that teachers may properly organize themselves into a band of robbers for the purpose of employing knowledge in preying upon society. The very idea is odious to educational thought. A declaration of ethical purpose is, therefore, inherent in education as theory and practice.

### *The Classics of Learning Are Ethical*

Moreover, in the funded wisdom and knowledge which education cherishes and expounds are the classical works of the world's ethical teachers. Education would cease to be education if it ruled out of consideration Plato's *Republic*, the Bible,

or the writings of all such thinkers as Thomas Aquinas, John Ruskin, or Ralph Waldo Emerson. Ironical as it may seem, if society were stripped of ethical cement it would offer nothing to bandits and robbers. Even they thrive on the ethics of others; for ethical forces are indispensable to the existence of every society, primitive or civilized. By the examples of leaders, by the content of the heritage committed to it, education derives from ethics and is bound to make ethics a controlling and inspiring concern of its continuing interest.

### *Education Includes the Training of Body and Spirit*

It is not merely with the transmission of knowledge that education is deeply concerned. The functions of the schools are not fully described by a summary of programs, curriculum, and methods. No written or spoken words do, or can, completely convey the meaning of education as the day-to-day living force that it is in fact and may be—in the transactions of the classroom, in the relations of teacher and pupil, in the associations of pupil and pupil, and in the experiences of the library and athletic field. Here are exchanges, bearings, and influences too subtle for logical expression and exact measurement. Yet we cannot doubt their existence, at least those of us who recall our own educational experiences and see teachers at work. Here, in the classroom, the auditorium, laboratory, and gymnasium, are in constant operation moral and cultural forces just as indispensable to civilization as knowledge or any material elements—indeed primordial in nature and the preconditions for the civilized uses of material things. We cannot set them forth in mathematical tables, nor in parallel columns; we can merely hint at their more evident characteristics.

In classrooms, day by day, thousands of teachers come into contact with children of all sorts and conditions, races and nationalities, religious and ethical backgrounds. From homes of every kind—those broken by disputes of parents, wracked by the uncertainties and distresses of poverty and unemploy-

ment, no less than those tranquil in management and supplied by the means of material well-being. From homes poor in spirit, devoid of art, without books, without interest in things above the routine of living and the babble of gossip, thin in culture, perhaps tinged with crime, beset by distempers of mind, no less than from the homes that represent the best in American life. Here in the classrooms is manifest the gamut of American civilization.

The school is not set apart from society on an academic hill. Teachers are more constantly and intimately associated with, or at least brought into contact with, things great and small in American society, high and mean, than the members of any other profession, public or private. They must grapple with the distempers which society and individual conduct generate, while seeking to preserve and to disseminate the best that is in its culture. The schools deal with the enduring stresses of human life, as well as with its enduring values.

And this they do through the living contacts of teachers and the taught, pupil and pupil. Discipline and freedom, authority and responsibility, helpfulness and challenge are made living in the spoken word, in attitude, gesture, and behavior. When the shortcomings of education are admitted, when the pettiness or incompetence of this or that teacher is conceded, we have only to imagine what American society would be if all public-school buildings were razed and all public education abandoned. This is not to say that there was nothing good before public education was established, but that public education maintains and demonstrates human relations indispensable to the good life in itself and to the perdurance and functioning of a democratic society.

### *Education Fosters the Social Virtues by Example*

In the classroom and on the playground, from hour to hour and year to year, are in fact exemplified the better virtues of the enlarged family. Order and play are balanced, mutual

aid and mutual respect are promoted, displays of unleashed passion are discredited and discouraged, and the give and take of the good life are illustrated. Habits of reasoned obedience, illuminated by knowledge of consequences, are inculcated. The good and the beautiful, without which both the fine arts and the practical arts are poverty-stricken and lampless, are incorporated in conduct, and in visible signs—books and maps, pictures and flowers, or drawings and designs. Even in the poorest and most barren schoolroom in the poorest and most barren community, education in form and practice rises to some height above the lowest common denominators of the district; not high enough, by confession, yet to some height. Here, so to speak, is a little focus of civilization, a symbol of its values, an embodiment of its aspirations in things, words, and deeds. Here the values of society appear in miniature, in microcosm. Here is woven during the formative years of youth a texture of knowledge, habit, aspiration, and mutual respect which aids in holding society together, counteracts the divisive forces of personal, political, and economic rivalry, and helps to sustain humanity amid all the forms of untried being through which it must pass. Politics, economics, finance, administration, amusements, the practical arts, wars, and even social cyclones are phases of life; education is concerned with the whole of life and the best of it. It has been so conceived and is now so conceived, however faulty and defective the personalities and procedures associated with it. Thousands of schools in the United States, no doubt, fall far below the ideal standards, but that fact is merely evidence of the need for heroic efforts in the direction of improvement, not a repudiation of educational obligations.

*Education Is Committed to the Maintenance and Improvement of American Society*

Beyond the fiduciary trust vested in it, beyond the heritage of ideas and practices which it deems *intrinsic* values, education has other obligations, called for convenience *extrinsic*.

It is committed to the maintenance and improvement of American society as now constituted and unfolding, and to the use of knowledge and the practical arts in a manner conducive to these ends. Outside of society, neither education nor individual liberty nor the practical arts can flourish. Those who would make a new social order can scarcely imagine that there is no good whatever in the present array of things, or in the men and women out of which the new order is to be made. Nor will any who fain would limit education to the mere maintenance of the present order, assuming that it will not change in the future, be bold enough to say that it is utopia, a good without possibility of improvement, unmixed with evil. Although extremists may enjoy the luxury of such views, educators loyal to the knowledge which they are bound by their office to cherish cannot accept either of them as a dictate for educational theory and practice. If the past is all wrong, why study it or hope for the future? If the present is perfection, why the poverty and distresses of children in the schoolroom and the conflicts of party and interest outside? The sharp antithesis sometimes drawn between those who would have the schools create a new social order and those who would confine them to a mere defense of a *status quo* does not correspond to the known facts in the case.

### *This American Society Is Democratic*

The American society which education aids in maintaining and improving is by declaration, profession, and institutional organization a democratic society. It is such in truth, however far short of the ideal it may fall in many respects. It is not a monarchical society. It is not a military dictatorship. It has no legally established classes with prescriptive rights of government. Children are not assigned to a class by birth and held there till death. Its occupation, callings, and professions, and the opportunities to enter them are not wholly determined by accidents of birth. Gateways are not closed to talents by class law. Governments derive their just powers from the consent of

the governed, and may be altered by the governed through the institutions of the law itself. The conflicts of society are to be resolved and its problems are to be handled by the processes of discussion and popular action.

### *It Repudiates Government by Sheer Force*

To this type of society the American people are committed by their heritage, by long practice, and by their sense of values. Other types have existed and now exist. Whatever their diversities in external forms, they are distinguished from the democratic society in their reliance on force for the establishment of government and the direction of domestic policy. The founders of the American Republic were familiar with them. They did not foresee the names that were to be applied to such societies in coming years; but they understood their essence, examined their merits, and rejected them. In establishing the Constitution of the United States by proposal, discussion, and popular decision, instead of resorting to force, as advised by hot-heads, they broke the rhythm of history and correctly believed that they had set an example to mankind. The rejection of the lesson by other societies does not destroy the validity of the democratic process for the United States.

### *Democracy Nourishes the Free Spirit of Science*

It may be said, however, that science and the scientific method which American education is bound to nourish are neutral, are indifferent to forms of government and the human values of democracy; in other words, that science may be monarchial, absolutist, or dictatorial in spirit. Men of science may, no doubt, bow to military and police force; they have often done just that. But science cannot employ all its powers in advancing the boundaries of knowledge, unless it is free to inquire and to expound its findings. The age-long conflict be-



tween science and authority demonstrates the truth of this proposition. It so happens, therefore, that the democratic processes of government are in harmony with the processes by which science proceeds from victory to victory. In American society citizens are free to inquire, to expound, to propose, and to appraise. Constitutional rules declare this freedom. Custom sanctions it. Institutions of government protect it. Among its many obligations, public education is charged with disseminating the knowledge and keeping alive the spirit necessary to the functioning of democracy. In so doing it helps to provide the conditions in which science can flourish and hence is loyal to the traditions and requirements of science.

*Democracy Rests on Ideals, Institutions,  
and Economy*

The founders and early sponsors of American democracy were not under the illusion that it would work automatically by the mere counting of heads. Emphasis on eternal vigilance was as constant and as noteworthy as their championship of the democratic idea. They were poignantly aware that dictatorships had been established on popular distempers; that advocates of physical force had repeatedly appealed to passion for support. Democracy, they knew, rests upon a moral imperative that human life has a value in itself and cannot be used for purposes alien to humanity. Unremitting insistence upon this value, the development of this moral sense, is an obligation of all who teach and lead in democracy. Furthermore, loyalty to the institutions through which democracy functions, a willingness to abide by popular verdicts reached by due process, and to seek reversal, if desired, by the same methods—these too are essential elements of our democratic society. Yet, while laying emphasis on moral values and institutional loyalties, the founders and sponsors of American democracy also recognized the basic fact that the forms of property and the distribution of wealth—the ways and means

of physical life—bear an inescapable relation to a democratic society, to its establishment and maintenance, and to the adjustments requisite to its functioning.

*The Philosophy of Democracy Enters into  
the Definition of Education*

In any realistic definition of education for the United States, therefore, must appear the whole philosophy and practice of democracy. Education cherishes and inculcates its moral values, disseminates knowledge necessary to its functioning, spreads information relevant to its institutions and economy, keeps alive the creative and sustaining spirit without which the letter is dead. The solution of specific problems of democracy devolves upon society. Education does not arrogate that function to itself. It does not claim either the competence or the sole power—legal or spiritual. But education does preserve and spread knowledge appropriate to the solution of specific problems, instills the disciplines essential to the acquisition of knowledge, describes the points of view from which problems are discussed, sets forth the assumptions and imperatives on which solutions depend, and in the classroom illustrates the spirit and procedure in which knowledge and reason are applied in coping with the adjustments of society. Whether these issues are related to political institutions, to finance and taxation, to industry, commerce, and agriculture, to public health, to the conservation and use of natural resources, to international relations and national defense, education is concerned with them. It presents knowledge relevant to them. It sets forth theories and values, from which they are approached. It illustrates in miniature, apart from the tempers and distempers of the political arena, the processes of enlightenment and discussion by which matured decisions are reached. Such is the obligation imposed on education by the democratic society in which it functions and which it serves. It cannot do less than assume the obligation, if loyal to its commitments. In so doing it acts not as a mere branch of government, as

one profession among many engaged by government. It stands behind, exemplifies, and aids in sustaining all the processes of government and society.

*The Assurance of Democratic Society Is  
No Longer Taken for Granted*

A sense of social responsibility has not been absent from education at any stage of its development; but for a long time the maintenance and improvement of American society were taken for granted as the automatic outcomes of individual activities. It was once assumed by some thinkers that the primary function of education was to train individuals so that they could rise into callings deemed higher, if not more lucrative. By other thinkers it was assumed that education must be concerned essentially with teaching the elements of the practical arts, and that the possessors of these elements would automatically find just and appropriate opportunities for employing them in the economy of society. For a period in American history, while the exploitation of the land and resources of the continental domain was proceeding and world trade expanding without apparent limits, these assumptions seemed founded on the realities of American practice. To be sure, some elements of history and civics were taught in this age of confidence, but instruction in these subjects was often so formal as to convey to pupils no sense of their worth or importance. It seems in harmony with the record to say that for nearly fifty years—from approximately 1870 to 1920—education took for granted the future of democratic society and, perhaps to a less extent, the eternal validity of the theory that both individual prosperity and social security were to be automatically assured by the free application of talents to personal ends.

Now the future of democratic society is challenged, not only in Europe and Asia, but in quarters by no means obscure or negligible in the United States.

## *Education Now Lays Emphasis on Its Social Obligations*

As organized education turns to the future, then, it discards the theory of automatic democracy. It recognizes that rights to life, liberty, property, work, and the pursuit of happiness are shadows, unless those who claim the rights are competent and have the moral power necessary to the creation and maintenance of the social arrangements in which rights may be realized. If this obligation is staggering in its dimensions, educational leadership must accept it, acquire the knowledge, and put forth the sustained effort calculated to discharge it. Here, too, in facing the future, education reemphasizes the fact that it is not merely one profession among many, one branch of government among many. Its functions are all encompassing. Its duties are unique in their human aspects.

## *It Must Serve an Associational Economy*

Not only is the automatic theory of democracy challenged by events. The very economy in which it was once applied with assurance has been altered by events. So far as the major branches of manufacture, mining, and transportation are concerned, the associative system of the corporation has been substituted for individual ownership and management. To a less degree this rule holds for distributive branches of economy. In the field of industrial labor, freedom of individual movement is likewise limited by the associative efforts of independent and company unions. Even in agriculture, once the stronghold of individual independence, cooperative organizations gain strength, for marketing and credit purposes, and to some extent for buying. More and more, the fruit grower and the dairy farmer, for example, find themselves entering into and bound by collective marketing agreements, to which are generally attached, by law or custom, standards of quantity and quality.

## *It Must Prepare Youth for Associational Life and Activities*

From this situation emerge stubborn facts with which educational theory and practice must reckon and cope. The overwhelming majority of the graduates of the schools in the cities who enter upon economic activities will be employees of corporations, including the managerial, clerical, and industrial branches. If in business on their own account, they will be, in most cases, in corporate business or in enterprises to some extent associative in character. If independent in theory, they will have collective responsibilities in trade organizations and will be bound, more or less, by codes of fair practice. Graduates who enter employments below the managerial range will, in large proportion, find themselves in economic associations of some kind, carrying obligations and limitations. Specializing farmers, besides skill and resources, will need the knowledge and power requisite for the functioning of the associations through which marketing and price adjustments are effected. Thus school graduates will, in the main, whatever their careers, require knowledge of their associative obligations and the power to prevent such activities from degenerating into antisocial interests.

The business of society with which education is concerned is even more complicated than these few words indicate. The private organizations that occupy such a large area of economy have associations with one another; organized labor with organized industry; milk producers' societies with distributors; extractive industries with manufacturing industries, for example. The relations already established by practice are numerous and technical; on both sides special knowledge is employed.

Economic science sets forth this knowledge, with more or less completeness. Education disseminates it. The graduates of schools will need it, as certainly as technical proficiency, in the life and work upon which they are to enter. How are private economic associations formed? What are their present struc-

tures? How do they function? What are their rights and obligations? In what relation do the individual and the family stand to their forms and activities? If graduates from the schools are to have preparation for the real world of economic practice, education is compelled to take up these questions. To refuse this obligation would be to fall back upon formalism and unreality. To education alive to its responsibilities such withdrawal is impossible.

*It Must Prepare Citizens for Participation  
in Associational Government*

The chart for educational planning is not yet completed. Surrounding these private associations is society, with government as its agency. Without the express or tacit consent of government these associations cannot come into being. Once in existence they raise problems for government and bring pressure upon it. To an increasing degree, in the nation and in the states, irrespective of parties and politics, government is drawn into the relations and activities of associations. It prescribes a great body of law for them. It circumscribes their conflicts. It is subject to impulses from their interests. It establishes agencies for facilitating their intertrade negotiations and adjustments. It imposes restraints on their practice. It is called upon to conserve the natural resources which they employ, and to define the "wise uses" of these resources. It has balances to maintain, endless adjustments to make.

Yet this government does not act in a vacuum under its own motion. Its officials are chosen directly or indirectly by enfranchised citizens. The public functions which they assume, the activities which they carry on, are the outcome of popular discussion and decision. So it happens then that citizens called upon to obey the law are the makers of law; and education is invited to do its part in preparing youth for a dual role—cooperation in obedience to law and cooperation in determining the forms and ends of law.

## *It Must Aid in Upholding Social Values*

All society is concerned with these associations and with any government for the moment in power. Society also has values which are more than economic or political in nature, which are indeed indispensable to economic and political operations. Society is concerned with all of culture, with the moral code that holds its members together, as well as with the trade ethics of particular interests, and the fortunes of particular parties. Men and women need to live, but they can be poor in spirit, feeble in powers, hateful in disposition, low in civilization, and disruptive in influence, even if rich in material goods. No society can be founded on purely pecuniary standards, or can endure if so founded, or can give to life that richness of satisfaction and opportunity which makes it worth the living. And upon education is laid an obligation to see that the youth of the land possess the cultural values which sustain society, hold the conflicts of politics and economy within bounds, and enrich life itself.

## *It Faces New Responsibilities for the Education of Adults*

Developments in machine industries and the deepening public interests in the quest for solutions of collective problems have also added obligations in adult education to the already heavy burdens of the schools. The period of youth is prolonged by the restriction of opportunities to enter upon life work. The high tempo of industry tends to discard men and women from occupations at or near the close of middle life. Public health measures, the curtailment of immigration, and a declining birth rate raise the proportion of adults in our society. The requirements of democratic self-government make it necessary for citizens to acquire a wider and deeper knowledge of public questions. Under the impact of these forces, schools are compelled to make extra provisions for youth

approaching maturity and for men and women with leisure at their command—either forced or voluntary leisure. They are called upon to open their doors for the reasoned and sober discussion of public questions, to maintain forums in which the consideration of great issues may proceed.

All this, no doubt, is both fitting and proper—in keeping with and an expansion of the democratic process of self-government. It is not foreign to education. Yet it imposes upon leadership in school administration the duty of widening its horizon and grappling with intellectual and moral problems of the highest order. The issues so raised are certainly not less fundamental than those involved in freedom of the press and speech. Indeed by judicious administration, representing the general interest, school authorities may well supplement the discussions carried on by private agencies, such as the press and the radio, make their “public hearings” less partial and more informative, and contribute even more powerfully to the maintenance of democratic methods in government. As thus far developed under federal and state auspices, adult education in the public schools displays standards of administrative impartiality and local autonomy that promise to keep this channel of communication and inquiry free and wide open. The experiments already undertaken, refined and extended, will doubtless form a permanent part of educational duties in the United States.

*So Defined, Education Is Distinguished  
from Propaganda*

By the conception herewith presented education is distinguished from propaganda, but the point deserves amplification. It is true that propaganda “in the broadest sense is the technique of influencing human action by the manipulation of representations” which may take “spoken, written, pictorial, or musical form.” Yet in practice propaganda may be more accurately characterized as influencing human conduct by



the manipulation of *mis*representations, or at least partial representations, for the advantage of special interests and with a view to commanding unquestioning obedience. There may be, and often is, a large element of truth in propaganda; without that element even the most ingenious propaganda fails.

When the purpose of a propaganda is to influence the whole of society, however, it means imposing upon all individuals slogans, formulas, and patterns of conduct in the interest of those in power at the moment or seeking to get into power. It is an instrument of a faction or a party. It is the foe of scientific exploration, of the open discussion required for the winnowing of truths particular and general, and of the progress that comes from the competition of new devices, ideas, processes, and practices. As applied to politics, it usually exalts in the name of the state the power of party against the individual, and demands servile acquiescence. In the form of Fascism, Individualism, or Marxism, propaganda assumes the infallibility of omniscience and pretends to possess a closed system of knowledge which enables adepts to prescribe the "right thing" in all circumstances and to guarantee the predicted outcome as good—immediately or in the long run. Whatever its guise, it belies single-hearted pursuit of truth and is the foe of every educational program committed to guarding, enlarging, and disseminating the funded knowledge of the human race.

To be sure, education cannot be entirely divorced from immediate ends and objectives. Yet there is a center of gravity in education which is not the center of gravity in propaganda. The spirit of education differs from that of propaganda. In some respects, as in other matters, it is a question of emphasis, but the emphasis is fundamental. The propagandist deliberately refuses to present with all the fairness that human fallibility will permit the other positions or points of view which enter into competition with his own. He places the interest of his group above all other interests. His temper is dogmatic, not inquiring or reasoning. He puts forward opinions as

established facts and closes his mind to new truths incompatible with his ends. If education could perchance endorse any of his designs, it could not proceed in his spirit or follow his methods without violating its trust. By its inescapable obligations, it has other functions to discharge.

## VII.

### CONDITIONS REQUISITE FOR THE DIS- CHARGE OF EDUCATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

TAKEN in its fullness, education stands apart from the other public services, such as public works and public safety, and is distinguished by obligations of its own. It underlies and helps to sustain all public services. The schools furnish in the main the preliminary discipline upon which training for the services is based, and state universities provide technical instruction necessary for the discharge of professional duties. The schools and colleges disseminate knowledge pertaining to the sciences, arts, and crafts employed in every branch of administration. They distribute information and promote understanding respecting the services—information and understanding calculated to maintain the public support and cooperation which enable administrative division to function effectively. Education also supplies an ethical cement that helps to hold together the very civilization in which all services operate, upon which they depend for sustenance. American society could exist on some level of comfort and convenience without improved roads, electric lights, or sanitary codes; it did in the eighteenth century and at the same time demonstrated qualities of true greatness; but it cannot exist upon its present level or attain a higher level, with an illiterate and ignorant population dominated by low standards of taste, subsistence wants, and primitive conceptions of life.

#### *School Administrators Need Special Qualities*

When education is considered in terms purely administrative, distinctions from other services are likewise evident. The schoolboards and boards of college trustees responsible for the general policies and the administration of education have

contacts with society and power over individuals that are different from, and wider-reaching in subtle consequences than those assigned for instance, to a government commission which regulates railway rates, passes upon the trade practices of given industries, or makes rules for transactions arising from workmen's compensation laws. To emphasize this would be to repeat all that has been said before. The school superintendent also has duties not imposed on any other administrative officer. Records and accounts he must keep or scrutinize; estimates and reports he must prepare; and other functions of administrative routine he must perform. In these respects his responsibilities resemble those of administrative officers in general, although his statistical statements represent distinct aspects of human life and aspirations, as well as money, materials, buildings, and supplies. But the superintendent's obligations are more extensive.

Those of the health commissioner, the superintendent of public works, the director of public welfare, and other administrative officers are not to be underestimated; but their duties and contacts with society are limited and specialized. As head of a system in which all arts and sciences are taught, the school administrator is called upon to possess knowledge and intellectual interests that are broader than those of any one profession. Without this knowledge and these interests he cannot act effectively as the channel of communication between the schoolboard and the teachers who organize curriculum and carry on instruction, to say nothing of taking the leadership expected of him in such matters. As head of the schools he is subject to impacts from nearly all the interests, good and bad, that operate in the community, not merely to those touching health, or public works, or the relief of dependents. Under his jurisdiction are children from practically all sections of the community, not merely those affected by specific regulations of a police, sanitary, or industrial character. Literally nothing that goes on in the community is alien to him. The very nature of his office imposes peculiar duties

upon him. It is not by speeches at political rallies or by public appearances that he discharges them; his work is in the domain of knowledge and aspiration; and often the less that is heard about it, the better it is done. If, legally speaking, the school superintendent is one administrator among many, the term is meaningless until the primary functions of education are brought into consideration. It is then that the unique characteristics of educational administration become evident and present the case for a special administrative relation to the general structure of government.

*Yet Education Is One among Many Branches  
of a Growing Public Service—All  
Involving Public Support*

From the point of view of finance and administration, however, education is one among many public services associated with the rising standards of civilization. Communities demand better highways, more adequate water supplies, improved public health administration, hospitals, public works, and other technical utilities deemed essential to good living. Like education, these services have usually imposed burdens upon tax resources and have led not unnaturally to a certain competition among them for financial support.

*Demand Has Arisen for More Centralized Control  
over All Divisions of Administration*

The pressure of the public services upon the community for revenues has been largely responsible for the rise and growth of a movement for budget reform and for the consolidation of all administrative agencies in a centralized system. Leaders in this movement call attention to the increase in expenditures rendered necessary by the expansion of public services. They point out that as the services have multiplied and outlays have strained the resources available, budget-making and the unification of agencies have become imperative. They insist that since resources are limited and curtailments in expenditures

are demanded, all the services seeking places in the budget must be appraised as parts of a common program. Extremists among them propose to make educational administration a mere branch of the general administration, headed by a single political officer, and to treat the school budget as a mere division of the general budget. Besides urging these alterations in the position of the schools, they advocate a thoroughgoing centralization of accounting, purchasing, plant construction, and personnel administration.

*Any Adaptations to Schemes of Centralization  
Are To Be Made within the Limits  
of Educational Objectives*

Educational administrators recognize the exigencies out of which the demand for efficiency and economy has sprung, and the community interests which they are designed to serve. Where it can be demonstrated that there are net advantages in the consolidation or coordination of administrative operations, it should be effected, so far as the unique services of education are not thereby impaired. At all times there should be a free exchange of technical experiences and opinions in respect of common administrative processes throughout the entire government; and this exchange will be facilitated as the standards of competence and public responsibility are raised in all branches of government. But in these consultations and efforts in cooperation, school and college authorities are compelled by the obligations of their trusts to safeguard the fundamental nature of the educational function, and to point out with unceasing reiteration its primary and basic character, its intellectual and moral contributions to the maintenance of the society upon which all services depend for their existence and support. Whether it is a question of budget-making, the keeping of accounts, the selection of personnel, the purchase of supplies, or the construction of school buildings, the indubitable requirements of education call for fiscal and administrative distinctions fully adapted to the care and training of youth.

This does not mean that educational authorities are or should be indifferent to the demand that school budgets be made and school administration conducted with reference to the total financial situation of the community or of the larger areas to which they may be related. In the best of jurisdictions school budgets are prepared with a view to the requirements of the other services and the financial resources available to all. In these jurisdictions school authorities are well informed respecting the state of general revenues and expenditures and do give to appropriate budget-making officers, as well as to the public, complete information relative to school receipts and outlays. They also seek information on the general situation from fiscal officers and invite from other specially qualified persons and the public a consideration of the tentative educational budget before reaching final determinations. This best practice should be more widely extended. By such processes of developing information and suggestions, the advantages of economy and efficiency may be obtained without surrendering that degree of autonomy necessary to the discharge of educational obligations. Understandings of this character are the more readily effected where school superintendents are well prepared by training and experience for taking leadership in community affairs and for presenting to the public and its official representatives the school budget in terms of the human values covered by its items; and like demands may properly be made upon other administrative officials in their special fields. Herein seems to lie the hope for meeting the legitimate demands for efficiency and economy in general administration while safeguarding the fiduciary trust vested in educational authorities by the American system of government.

*Settled Practice Accords a High Degree  
of Administrative Freedom to  
Education at All Levels*

The peculiar nature of education and its functions in society have been recognized by the sober judgment of the American

people as expressed in constitutions and statutes. This judgment is revealed in many types of administrative authorities to which educational responsibilities are assigned by law. These vary, no doubt, from state to state, and region to region; but one fundamental principle underlies almost all of them. It is that authorities, state and local, in charge of the public schools and colleges are to stand apart from the executive and legislative branches of the government which respond annually, biennially, or quadrennially to the majority or plurality of votes cast in popular elections at the close of political campaigns.

The remoteness varies in degree. Members of the schoolboard may be chosen by popular vote at a general or special election, and thus stand upon an independent basis. As a rule this independence in elective trustees is strengthened by renewing only a portion of the board at each election, thus assuring a certain continuity in policy. If the members are appointed by an executive authority alone, or in conjunction with the legislative branch or one house thereof, they are usually given longer terms and provision is made for overlapping tenures so that the political agents endowed with appointing power can seldom make a clean sweep of the officials in charge of education. Moreover, where general administrative control over the schools is vested in a board of some kind, practice often permits bipartisan or multipartisan representation. Frequently the schoolboard is given an independent taxing power, within limits, and in such circumstances is not even subject to executive and legislative control in matters of finance or of educational policy in detail.

Other differences in methods and agencies of control have been developed for various levels and branches within the school system. The public elementary- and secondary-school systems, although creatures of the state, are ordinarily administered by district, municipal, or county boards of education. The colleges and universities which make up the states' systems of higher education are commonly controlled by appointed or elected boards of regents. Amid all this diversity of adminis-



trative machinery, however, a high degree of administrative freedom is generally provided not only for the local public-school systems, but also for state educational administration, and for the agencies of higher education and research. The discussion here is to be interpreted in inclusive terms; "education," "teachers," and "schools" refer not merely to the elementary and secondary fields, but to the higher institutions of learning and research as well.

*The Desire To Keep Education out of Partisan  
Politics Is One of the Reasons for  
Administrative Protection*

The removal of educational administration some degree from periodical turnovers in regular legislative and executive offices is no accident. Although it cannot be said that in the beginning our lawmakers always had a positive philosophy of administrative independence for the schools, they early discerned a distinction between education and other public-service functions. The idea of vesting public power in a board, as distinguished from a single elective or appointive officer, was, of course, no novelty in the middle period of American history, when the foundations of public education were securely laid. There were many American precedents in other departments of administration, especially where large powers in the determination of policy were assigned to public agencies.

If the nature of educational functions had not been sufficient to warrant the practice of resorting to boards, the desire to escape from the obvious evils of the spoils system and partisan squabbles, introduced wholesale in the Jacksonian era, might have effected that outcome. Indeed, in some cases, such as police and health administration, the board system was deliberately adopted with a view to making administration at least bipartisan in control and direction. Whatever the determining factor in the case of education, the administration of schools was early committed to boards and they were assigned a high degree of independence in policy and finance.

### *Even Administrative Consolidation Recognizes the Special Position of Education*

There has been, it is true, a decided reaction against the confusion of independent boards, offices, and commissions which Jacksonian democracy promoted. This reaction has appeared in the consolidation of state and local administration in all parts of the Union. And it has been assumed by some logicians that the concentration of authority will and must continue until all public functions are united and organized in hierarchical form with a single political executive at the top. Yet, as a matter of fact along with this powerful movement in the direction of administrative unification, practices of another tendency have continued or developed, especially in connection with education.

### *Other Public Functions Are Provided with Kindred Safeguards*

For example, from the very beginning of American history a certain independence has been assigned to the judiciary. Entirely apart from their function of passing upon the constitutionality of statutes, judges deal with vital matters of long-time interest, such as crime, civil liberty, property rights, and domestic relations. Whatever may be the results of periodical elections, whatever changes legislators may make in the civil and criminal law, the new is connected with the old, and fundamental matters continue from decade to decade or develop slowly under the impact of forces not purely or even mainly political.

On such grounds, judges of superior courts are given life terms, or long terms, and seldom is an entire bench renewed at a single election. There is also a tendency to make the election of judges nonpartisan, by the removal of party symbols and designations from the ballot in judicial elections. Moreover, positive restrictions are placed upon the removal of judges by political authorities. By and large, the judgment of the American people runs against throwing the punishment

of crime and the adjudication of personal relations into the turmoil of annual or biennial elections.

The removal of public agencies some degree from immediate political turnovers has not been confined to the judiciary. Many branches of federal and state administration, especially boards and commissions, have been given a special position in the frame of government. This is particularly true of agencies that have semilegislative and semijudicial, as well as administrative functions. Striking examples are furnished by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Power Commission, and the Federal Trade Commission. Members of these bodies, though appointed by the President and Senate, are given long terms. Their tenures are made overlapping, so that a certain continuity of competence is assured; and, in the ordinary course, single popular elections do not make drastic changes in the personnel. In addition, the removal power of the President is hedged about by restrictions, with a view to attenuating the force of mere partisanship.

There is basic work that must go on in society whatever the cast of the party thought and the direction of particular decisions at the polls. With the growth of technological functions in economy and government, this basic work expands and the dependence of society upon the competence employed in it increases. All these things are now recognized by law, incorporated in practice, and sustained by an informed public opinion.

As a matter of fact, in many departments of government where the executive has free appointing and removal power, competence, tenure, and promotion are safeguarded by practice, for reasons similar to those applied by law in many instances. A searching study of federal usage in these matters of personnel shows that relatively few of the divisions and bureaus, about one-fifth of the total number, are purely political, in that the heads are likely to be ousted with each party turnover. Nearly all the technical divisions—entomology, plant industry, forestry, reclamation, chemistry, and public roads,

for example—are now generally established on the merit basis. The worst spoilsman in federal politics would not put an untrained real estate agent in charge of research in fixed nitrogen. If he were so inclined, the pressure of civic and professional associations, organized outside the government, would place barriers in his way. The most ardent partisanship must recognize the expediency, if not the social need, of competence in technical and professional branches of the government. Even states and municipalities which have no civil service laws take some account of this reality by safeguarding competence in carrying on the basic functions of government.

*Autonomy Is in Keeping with  
Democratic Principles*

In all this there is no denial of democracy. No public agencies, no public policies, are placed beyond the reach of the popular verdict as delivered in due course. Democracy requires that the judgment of the people must prevail, but American institutions are designed to assure that in matters fundamental the popular judgment be matured. In other words, they do not place all rights and obligations of life, liberty, and economy at the disposal of the majority or plurality which carries a single election for political officers. Such rights are not absolute, nor are they indefensible against government for all time. No public officer or private person enjoys privileges forever beyond the sovereignty of the seasoned popular verdict. Legal safeguards, tenure, and independence, of whatever kind or degree, are intended to serve, not to block, the deliberative processes of democracy and to guarantee the competent discharge of its primary functions. The principle is not to be employed as a subterfuge. It is entitled to more than lip service. It is so fundamental to the future of democratic society that it must be respected, maintained, and defended, if a way is to be steered between government by plebiscite and government by privilege, whether newly usurped or entrenched in tradition and prescription.

It is within an institutional setting which assures a certain competence and continuity of administration that education has also been assigned a high degree of independence. This independence is no accident of politics and law; it is, at least in a large measure, the result of deliberate policy, adopted with reference to the broad purposes of education and defended on positive grounds. Yet the autonomy so guaranteed does not cut education off from society, or from the long-run judgments of the electorate. The protection afforded, such as it is, merely runs against the pressure of active and vociferous minorities, and to some extent against particular majorities which win control of the executive and legislative departments at particular moments on issues other than those of education. In due course the deliberate opinion of the community prevails in educational administration, as far as general policy goes; but even community judgment cannot overturn the knowledge which education is pledged to cherish and disseminate, without destroying education.

### *There Are Special Grounds for Vigorously Supporting Educational Independence*

But general principles are not enough. In view of the pressures brought upon the schools by organized minorities, in view of recent legislation questioning the integrity and loyalty of teachers, in view of recent political interference with professional appointments and dismissals, in view of the demand that education be placed immediately under the financial control of executive and legislative authorities, it is necessary to go into details. Why does public policy assign a high degree of independence to education?

### *Scientific Instruction Is Independent of Politics*

1. With respect to technical and scientific subjects of instruction in the schools, especially those related to the practical arts, education is in fact independent of political turnovers

at the polls. This rule applies to mathematics, the natural sciences, and many elements of studies less exact in nature. The swings of popular majorities do not affect the validity of the multiplication table. The law of gravitation operates under Democratic as well as Republican or Socialist administrations. The conjugation of English and Spanish verbs is not ousted by an incoming party fresh from victory. If in a moment of excitement a legislature should order the schools to teach that the world is flat, educational administration cannot obey, if it is to be loyal to knowledge and truth. Where it is necessary to formulate a curriculum adapted to the demands of the practical arts or community needs of any kind, the selections to be made, the methods to be adopted, and the organization to be effected must be entrusted to those having technical competence, if the very ends of instruction are not to be defeated. However able political executives and legislatures may be, they can do no more than lay down general principles of educational policy and must entrust specifications to educational authorities.

### *The Humanities Have Their Independent Imperatives*

2. In the domain of the humanities—literature, the fine arts, economics, political science, and sociology, for example—the prescriptions of the subjectmatter are less exact than in languages and the natural sciences; but even in this domain there are immense bodies of authentic and exact knowledge which competence and loyalty to truth must take into the reckoning. Even to enumerate them requires an encyclopedia; for instance, the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. But illustration may be given. The prices of commodities, the wages of labor, and the costs of industrial insurance are not accidents, wholly subject to legislative fiat, irrespective of prevailing conditions. If they were, the Congress of the United States, or at all events a sovereign constitutional body could, by mere resolution, make everybody rich.

In human affairs, no less than in the astro-physical universe, there are some necessities by which even sovereign political force is limited. Although these necessities are not as clear and positive as in the physical world, political policy must take account of them and accept their requirements, at least in the long run. Competence has not yet reduced them to an exact science, but competence alone is fitted to explore and set forth their boundaries. Hence it must be said in the broad field of the humanities, where differences of opinion do appear, there are many findings sustained by the general consensus of competence. These findings do not dictate policy to political authorities, but they do set limits to the operations, methods, and results of policy. For this reason even partisanship must allow a high degree of liberty to inquiry and teaching in the humanities, unless it is totally indifferent to the outcomes of its own determinations. Although it is difficult to make this as clear to the heedless as the exigencies of the multiplication table, intelligence is fully aware of it, at least in sober moments.

*The Teaching of Controversial Questions  
Calls for Judicial Prerogatives*

3. Into cultural subjects, such as history and economics, new ideas, or ideas foreign to the accepted thought and practice of the community, inevitably come, unless the subjects are deliberately distorted. For example, it is impossible to teach European history as truth without considering the diverse types of political, social, and economic theory and practice which have appeared in that history as fact. To state and describe those theories and practices with exactness and balance requires expertness of a high order and a scientific spirit foreign to the passionate disputes of partisan debate. Not even the ablest student of the subject will claim infallibility or the possession of "the whole truth." But certainly the informed and disciplined mind can come nearer to the ideal type of fair and balanced instruction in such difficult subjects than the uninformed mind inflamed by partisan or sectarian passions.

*Preparation for Citizenship Transcends  
All Partisan Limits*

4. There are wider and more secure reasons for a high degree of educational autonomy than the exigencies of mere competent instruction in the natural sciences and the social studies. They lie in the processes of democratic government itself. These processes, as already indicated, involve freedom of citizens to propose measures of government, liberty of discussion, unawed and unbought decisions on policies and measures, and continuous reexamination and appraisal of their results. These processes call for knowledge and an attitude of mind which are indispensable to the endurance of democracy. To acquire, preserve, and disseminate such knowledge is a primary function of education. It is likewise the bounden duty of education to give that mental training which prepares the people for discussion in an informed and equitable spirit, and for the acceptance of popular decisions without resort to force, "the parent of despotism."

In the higher ranges of public education, issues of current society must come into instruction unless it is to be sterile and false to life. Here under the direction of trained and competent teachers pupils may be taught to look all around modern problems, to examine the points of view from which discussion proceeds, to acquire exact knowledge, to learn the assumptions on which decisions depend, and to develop that even temper so necessary to the preservation of democratic institutions. When the processes and ends of our democratic society are placed above the exigencies of partisan politics and the immediate advantages of power, then it becomes evident that education as a safeguard and preparation for democratic living must not be subjected every hour and in every way to the unrestrained control of men and women lifted into political office for a brief term by the fortunes of campaigns and elections.



## *To Education Are Entrusted Enduring Interests and Values*

5. Beyond this argument it seems impossible to go. Yet one more step seems necessary. Owing to the nature of popular usage, there is danger that the term *democratic society* be taken too narrowly, in a mere political sense. Society is more than politics. It embraces all culture. And democracy implies the widest possible diffusion of culture and all the means essential to the good life. Committed by its historical and immediate obligations to cherishing and advancing the funded wisdom, knowledge, and aspirations of the race, education carries responsibilities which outrun the fortunes of annual, biennial, or quadrennial elections, the ups and downs of parties, the twists and turns of public opinion. In a literal sense, education is rooted in eternity, despite its proper affiliation with temporal events. It is concerned with all the humane interests which shape society, government, and public policies, and give richness to individual life. The very nature of such obligations and undertakings accords to education in the United States a special position among the administrative services of government.

The Constitution of the United States and the fundamental law of each state guarantee the freedom of inquiry and discussion which education is under obligation to preserve and cherish. That is not all. These constitutions also make provisions for changes which eventuate from freedom of inquiry and discussion, besides giving a wide latitude for operations of policy within the limits of existing constitutional law. In common with all other citizens, teachers are under obligation to respect the law; but in common with all other citizens they must recognize that changes in the law are constantly before the public for consideration. If they observe the dictates of truth when they teach the subjects touching government, economy, and society, they are compelled to present fairly and squarely changes which have been made, great issues of change

now pending, and the underlying assumptions by which they are to be determined. An oath to support a constitution does not impose an obligation to condemn and resist changes in it; such an oath carries with it an express obligation to support provisions which authorize alterations. This is obvious enough to seem banal, but confusion in public opinion requires re-statement.

### *School Authorities Have the Obligation To Sustain Educational Liberty*

In respect of legislative measures imposing upon schools the duty to teach certain subjects or to refrain from teaching them, other considerations prevail. The right of political authorities, within constitutional limits, and of the electorate through proper process, to require the teaching of some subjects and the exclusion of others is beyond question. Yet it is the duty of educational authorities to scrutinize ordinary legislative acts with reference to constitutionality. Surely the guardians of education have the same right as any interested private party to challenge in the courts any and all infringements of constitutional guarantees. By the very nature of the duties committed to them, they are especially obligated to do so. An individual may sacrifice a right, but public authorities, charged with fiduciary responsibilities, cannot do it without betraying their trust. No schoolboard is bound to obey a legislative act that is judged by proper legal authority to violate the constitution under which it operates.

Where a duty is legally and properly imposed upon educational authorities, they are compelled to adjust the discharge of that duty to all the responsibilities entrusted to them by law. Any other conception would make the whole curriculum a sport of passing legislative majorities. To confer upon a legislator or an executive in charge of other matters the power to prescribe minute rules for education is to declare schoolboards, superintendents, and teachers unworthy of their office

and to shake the confidence of pupils in the integrity of instruction.

*All These Circumstances Reinforce the Need  
of Legal Protection for Education*

Thus, disturbing events bring forcibly to the foreground the necessity for assuring to educational authorities throughout the entire school system a wide range of freedom in the determination of policies and the conduct of the schools. They are not entitled to, and do not seek, a position of impregnable irresponsibility against society or its matured judgments. They do not deny the validity of the claim that community budgets must be balanced, by curtailments if necessary, in time of stress. They accept the broad principle of democratic control. It is against the ravages of transitory politicians engaged in mere inquisitorial expeditions that they demand protection. They object to having teaching positions in schools and universities turned into the spoils of office, with continuous unsettlements and turnovers from election to election. They protest against allowing any legislative or administrative authority, chosen for other purposes and mainly engrossed in other business, to intervene at will in educational administration; to threaten college presidents, superintendents, and teachers with reprisals, to upset carefully arranged curriculums for petty reasons; to dictate the purchase of books and materials; to locate school buildings with respect to real estate projects; and otherwise to subject the schools to passing tempers and the demands of private interests. In stating their position, school authorities merely say that those responsible for educational policies and administration should be in fact responsible, should have powers commensurate with their duties, and should be immune against sporadic raids by men who are not responsible. In so contending they simply assert a fundamental principle of democracy and sound administration. As a unique form of public service, having obligations different from and

transcending other services, education must insist upon measures of law designed to assure it that form of autonomy in which it can best discharge its particular functions.

### *To Legal Safeguards Must Be Added Safeguards of the Spirit*

Legal rules, however, are not enough. Institutions of government must be sustained and supplemented by a determined spirit and by the efforts of individuals and associations united on constructive principles. Educators, no more than citizens at large, can expect to enjoy liberty without deserving it, by the mere fact of their existence. Human affairs do not run that way. Authorities in charge of the schools—boards, administrators, and teachers alike—and citizens desirous of protecting the educational trust against narrow views and passing tempers are themselves under obligation to weight their case with values beyond debate. They must be on guard against their own special interests and inquire into their own motives. It is not enough for them to assert privileges and to criticize in general terms political officers who seek economy and efficiency in government, or who put forward educational policies for public approval. The issue is not one of prescriptive right against power. It is rather one of established and demonstrated educational services against a short-sighted conception of public policies. So cherished and defended, education may confidently look forward to securing from society that autonomy and economic support to which it is entitled on its merits.

### *And Eternal Vigilance Is Necessary*

It may be said that these alarms are without warrant and that these principles are obviously taken for granted. Yet we have been duly instructed that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. We know that the schools have been and are subjected to the pressures of powerful minorities, seeking to impose their policies, not only by law, but also by threats of

reprisals. We see upon our statute books an increasing volume of legislation dictating the substance of education and the procedures to be followed in the classroom. We see competent teachers, principals, state superintendents, and university presidents dismissed for partisan or factional motives that threaten the very integrity of learning. To what lengths this tendency may go, we have no way of knowing. But concerning the animus and logic of some measures and actions there can be no doubt. Exact knowledge of current forces and movements is sufficient to forewarn us. The way to insure the integrity of education is to be on guard against violations and to adopt practices designed to preserve it against dissensions within and attacks from without. No golden road is open to us but experience suggests possible procedures. In providing the conditions necessary to the discharge of their obligations, educational authorities may find guidance in the efforts of constitution-makers to combine liberty with authority, and progress with security.

*This Vigilance Calls for Perfecting the Constitution  
of Self-Government for Education*

Despite numerous conflicts over "autonomy of the schools" and "freedom of teaching," few school authorities have worked out for their own guidance a statement of the fundamental principles to be employed in resolving such difficulties. Yet in a collective view of the best practices now prevailing, we can see the broad outlines of a constitution of self-government in education already taking form. Here, in the best practices, are defined the broad purposes of education and the powers of the agencies authorized to carry them into effect. The duties and rights of schoolboards, administrators, and teachers in general and in particular are set forth. Rules controlling the relations of school authorities to other branches of the government, to the public, to parents, to superintendents, and to teachers are laid down. The obligations of teachers and pupils in classroom exercises, especially those involving controversial issues, are

clarified. Agencies and procedures for the adjudication of differences of opinion respecting rights and duties have been instituted. It remains for us to unite the fragments, to generalize the best achievements, to enlarge upon and illuminate them, and to project for the future an educational philosophy and practice to which men and women of goodwill may repair, trusting that events beyond the horizon will justify, continue, and improve the work thus far advanced.

*The Demand for More Enlightenment  
and Greater Effort Is Here*

Many obstacles, no doubt, lie in the way of realizing the ideals and discharging the admitted obligations of education. The task places a heavy strain on the competence and the qualities of administrators and teachers; and the school is merely one of the many agencies concerned with education in its widest sense. Such contentions are to be readily conceded. The answer, however, is not to lower the objectives established, to seek an easier way, or to narrow education to the routine of the common denominator in the profession. The ideals are clearly before us, in the heritage of education and in the prescriptions of its leaders from antiquity to our own times. They are by no means the peculiar possession of public education; yet public education is bound to cherish and expound them. The responsibilities are likewise before us, in experiences evident even to the heedless. That the home, the church, the press, the radio, and private institutions also share the ideals and the responsibilities is recognized and must be emphasized. But in no way does this fact diminish the burdens of the public schools in their sphere. The degree to which administrators and teachers now fall below the highest standards set for them measures the urgency of the command that they enrich their own intellectual and spiritual resources, subject themselves to a more exacting discipline, and more abundantly deserve the public support through which education can attain its ideals and discharge its obligations.

# BOOK II

## THE EDUCATION OF FREE MEN IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY





## I.

### THE QUALITY OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

AMONG the American people may be found many superficial, partial, and even false conceptions of democracy. Deep-seated in the frontier and agrarian tradition is the idea that democracy scorns the refinements of life and approves crude and even coarse behavior. Yet more extreme is the assumption that rude and impudent manners toward the well-dressed and the educated are an evidence of peculiar devotion to the cause of human liberty. Closely related is the notion that democracy is a society without formalities in which everyone treats everyone else as if he were a member of the family, slapping him on the back, addressing him by his first name, and inquiring into his intimate personal life, even though he be a stranger. A more worthy variant of the same general pattern places the emphasis on simplicity of manners and a complete absence of ostentation, particularly on the part of persons of wealth or distinguished ancestry. According to yet another strain in the American tradition, democracy means nothing more than the showing of kindness and benevolence to dependents and "persons of no consequence" by men of power and influence.

Of a markedly different order is the view that democracy is to be measured by the ease with which an individual of enterprise and talent can acquire property, rise in the economic and political world, and eventually enroll his name or that of his children among the socially elite. According to yet another belief, the essential characteristic of democracy is a guarantee to the individual that he may do precisely what he pleases, that he may renounce all social obligation, that he may treat the concerns of others and even the laws of the state with contempt. A final limited conception is that a democracy is a society in which everybody votes and anybody is qualified to hold any kind of public office. Although there may be an

element of truth in each of these approaches to the nature of democracy, they are all superficial and inadequate.

### *Some More Fundamental Conceptions of Democracy*

Among the more fundamental conceptions of democracy there are four which are more or less widely held by the American people but which in spite of their great merits can scarcely be regarded as adequate.

The first and most generally accepted conception is political in character. Derived from the word itself and of very ancient lineage, it holds simply that democracy is a form of government through which the people rule and which guarantees to the individual certain political and civil rights and liberties. When applied to all men, regardless of race, class, or religion, this is unquestionably a conception of true grandeur and must be included in any attempt to clarify the meaning of democracy.

The second conception emphasizes the economic bases of human liberty. A democratic order is an order marked by freedom of enterprise in which every man is encouraged to follow the calling of his choice and is protected in the possession and enjoyment of the fruits of his labor. Unquestionably a democracy without economic foundations is unworthy of the name.

The third conception carries a social emphasis. Democracy is a society of great mobility, a society in which all artificial barriers are absent—a society in which the stratification of the population into more or less rigid social classes is repudiated in principle and rendered impossible in fact. This also is a doctrine of surpassing worth which must not be left out of the account. The fourth conception, passing beyond government, economy, and social structure, places stress on a great moral idea. It identifies democracy with a way of life in which the individual is made the center of things and is encouraged to develop freely according to his own nature. In this concep-

tion, too, there is a true emphasis which no serious attempt to deal with the question can afford to disregard.

Democracy certainly is each of these things. It has political, economic, social, and moral aspects. It is a form of government; it is a kind of economy; it is an order of society; it is a way of life; it is all of these things together. But it is more. Clearly, if it is to meet the challenge of the new despotisms, it must possess a dynamic quality and a universal tendency that are insufficiently expressed in the above conceptions. It must succeed in enlisting the loyalties and evoking the energies of men during a period of worldwide social convulsion. It must provide guiding principles and purposes for both the preservation and the reconstruction of society.

### *Democracy as a Great Social Faith*

Democracy is more than institutions and ways of life. It is a great social faith which, in response to the yearnings and struggles of many races and peoples, has been developing through the centuries.

The articles of the democratic faith have never been codified. They are recorded in the carefully preserved sayings and writings of the great prophets and seers of mankind, even as they may be found in the fugitive utterances and letters of ordinary men and women, in the songs and lamentations of the oppressed. They are embodied in customs and institutions—in the public school, the Bill of Rights, courts of justice, representative legislatures, systems of law, and ethical codes. Although the boundaries of this faith are elastic and changing, the following articles, related and interwoven, must be included:

*First, the individual human being is of surpassing worth*

*Second, the earth and human culture belong to all men*

*Third, men can and should rule themselves*

*Fourth, the human mind can be trusted and should be set free*

*Fifth, the method of peace is superior to that of war  
Sixth, racial, cultural, and political minorities should be  
tolerated, respected, and valued.*

*According to the first and most basic of the articles of the democratic faith, an article which embraces or at least provides the foundation for all the rest, the individual human being is of surpassing worth.* Here is a bold and liberating conception, holding within itself a perpetual challenge to every form of oppression. Individual men are more precious than the earth on which they live, more precious than the food and clothing which sustains and warms them, more precious than the farms and factories and ships by which they gain their livelihood, more precious than the paintings and statuary and symphonies and all the great works of art by which they are inspired. Individual men are more precious than states and principalities, more precious than customs and institutions, more precious than science and technology, more precious than philosophies and systems of thought, more precious than power and fame and glory. Even the Sabbath, symbol of so much that is sacred in the Christian tradition, was said by the founder of this religion to have been made for man. Individual men are not beasts of burden, nor slaves, nor serfs. Neither are they cannon fodder nor a commodity to be bought and sold in the market. Save only for the conditions of life which set them free and the great ideas and hopes which give them nobility, for which they should be ready to die if need be, men are the most precious things on the earth.

*The second article of the democratic faith is implicit in the first; the material earth and human culture belong to all men.* Whatever may be the appropriate institutional arrangements, the earth with its resources of soil, water, climate, flora, fauna, and minerals, with its continents and islands, its oceans and seas, its lakes and rivers, its mountains and valleys and plains, the earth which makes physical existence possible for man is regarded as the exclusive possession of no "superior"

race, or people, or class. Likewise human culture, the social heritage bequeathed to each new generation by all preceding generations of men, the social heritage of tools, machines, and buildings, of habits, customs, and folkways, of knowledges, appreciations, and values, of ideas, philosophies, and institutions, the social heritage whose nurture raises individual man above the brute and bestows upon him the gift of humanity, is looked upon as the monopoly of no privileged order of men. This second article of the democratic faith repeats the affirmation of the great Judaic-Christian ethic that all men are brothers; it repeats the affirmation of the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal.

*The first and second articles of the democratic faith, if taken by themselves, might conceivably be acceptable to a benevolent despotism; the third lays the political foundation of a society of free men. It declares that men can and should rule themselves.* This article, be it noted, contains not one but two affirmations, both equally daring and precious. It affirms not only that men *should* but also that they *can* rule themselves. Unequivocally rejecting autocracy in every form, however humane, it proclaims the doctrine that all men can and should be free, that, both as individuals and as members of society, they should share in framing the purposes for which they are to live. It repudiates as tyranny the ancient division of men into the rulers and the ruled. How daring, also how precious, this article is, the American people of the present generation, because of their long experience with political liberty, can scarcely comprehend. It must suffice to say that, from the standpoint of past ages, the very thought that "hewers of wood and drawers of water" should raise their voices in the councils of the nation is a form of treason—nay, a species of blasphemy. Whatever else a democracy may be it is first of all a society of free men.

*The fourth article of the democratic faith is a corollary of the third; it states without equivocation that the human mind can be trusted and should be set free.* It implies that

in the process of rule men should trust their own minds and be eternally vigilant in the guarding of those opportunities and liberties through which their minds are matured and rendered competent. It implies further that they should resist every effort on the part of any class or group to keep them in leading strings, to shape their opinions for them, to narrow their access to knowledge, to restrict their freedom to inquire and to learn. This fourth article of faith also represents a recognition of the superiority of the judgment of many over the judgment of one, a frank acceptance of the scientific method as the only dependable guide to knowledge about the affairs of men and society, and a clear recognition of the fact that the only trustworthy guardian of freedom is an informed and disciplined mind.

*The fifth article of the democratic faith affirms the immeasurable superiority of the method of peace over the method of war in the adjustment of differences and disputes among men.* Democracy looks upon resort to brute force as a barbaric survival from the past and works unceasingly for the day when war will be forever banished from the earth. It regards peace, moreover, as one of the great goods of life and knows that military habits and virtues are profoundly hostile to its own spirit. Wherever democracy goes it strives to substitute the method of peace for the method of force. The introduction into society of the process of free discussion, criticism, and decision by secret ballot as a way of rule constitutes one of the supreme achievements of civilized man, or rather perhaps as an achievement marking the appearance of civilized man. It must be evident of course that this fifth article of faith can be operative only in those spheres and in those relationships where all parties to controversy are loyal to its principles and are prepared to abide by judgments achieved by its procedures. As long as there exists in society a party or in the world a state that rejects the method of peace, democracy must be ready to meet force with force. While always working

for a universal acceptance of its faith, it must not neglect its own defenses.

*Finally, democracy believes that racial, cultural, and political minorities should be tolerated, respected, and valued.* It rejects completely the totalitarian theory that the health of a society is to be measured in terms of the extent of conformity and acquiescence. On the one hand, it realizes that the human values which it prizes most highly, personal integrity and charity, are destroyed by the passions aroused in the persecution and suppression of minorities. Bigotry and intolerance are the deadliest enemies of human freedom. On the other hand, democracy sees in the minority, in the dissident individual or group, a major creative force in society, an instrument of social discovery, invention, and advance. Even here, however, there must be a limit to tolerance. Whenever any minority employs the liberties of democracy to undermine and eventually to corrupt or destroy those liberties, it forfeits the guarantees of a free society. While vigilante and mob action in such cases should be prevented at all costs, the forces of public opinion, of social approval and disapproval, and in the last resort of the police power should be brought into full play. If democracy permits loyalty to its forms to sap its essential spirit it will be unable to triumph in its struggle with despotism.

### *America and the Democratic Faith*

The origins of the democratic faith are lost in the mists of history. Divers ancient peoples, notably the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, had a part in its early development. Later, certain Germanic tribes and particularly those that settled in Western Europe and on the neighboring islands of Britain added to the heritage. More recently the English, the French, the Swiss, and the small nations dwelling on the shores of the North and Baltic Seas have contributed mightily to the advance and the clarification of this faith. But of all the nations of the modern world America has been most fully and strik-

ingly identified with the fortunes of democracy. From early Colonial times the great majority of the people migrating to this new land were ranged on the side of the battle for popular freedom. Drawn largely from the more democratic nations of the Old World and from the more democratic elements in their own societies, they constituted from the first a positive selection in favor of the faith of common men. Then on this side of the Atlantic their conditions of life and their experience from generation to generation committed them more and more to the ways and spirit of democracy. Although there have always been contrary and hostile currents among them, it has been their identification with the cause of free men that has made their history significant.

### *The Appeal to Education*

The appeal to the school, and particularly to the public school, in the defense of democracy is peculiarly in the logic of this tradition. Although many motives and interests found expression in the establishment of the great state systems of public education in the last century, the conviction that the institution was necessary to the preservation and perfection of the American form of government and society played a powerful role. So today the presence of this conviction in the minds of multitudes of citizens constitutes the first line of defense against the growing attack upon education. The American people have always assumed, perhaps without subjecting the assumption to critical analysis, that the public school is of necessity a mighty bulwark of their democracy. They believe that it has contributed to the equalization of opportunity, the weakening of class distinctions, the induction of the immigrant into the ways and outlooks of American democracy, and the general raising of the level of economic, civic, and social understanding and competence.

The faith of the American people in the school is essentially sound. Unquestionably democracy depends on organized edu-



cation for its survival and improvement. This dependence, moreover, is greater today than yesterday, far greater than at the time of the founding of the great state systems, incomparably greater than in the days of the simple agrarian society before science and technology had complicated the problems of economy and government. But there is a difficulty here. The dependence on education is by no means confined to democracy. Every modern society, whether despotic or free, must have a far-flung system of schools and special institutions for developing the young. It must have such a system or perish. So, while the intuitions of the American people are sound, they are not particularly illuminating. Indeed, the intuitions themselves are in need of illumination. The confusion is due to the fact that the American people as a whole have never achieved a clear and adequate comprehension of the nature of education in relation to democracy or of the nature of democracy in relation to education. The dispelling of this confusion is an indispensable first step in harnessing the public school most fully to the task of educating a generation of free men.

### *The Nature of Education in Relation to Democracy*

The appeal to education in defense of democracy, advanced by citizens and teachers alike, is often uncritical. A basic source of the difficulty is that, without making their thought explicit, these people look upon education as a universal and uniform process. They assume that, after due allowances have been made for the adjustment of the process to the general advancement of knowledge, education is everywhere and at all times essentially the same. According to this view, moreover, education is always on the side of the angels; it is an unmingled blessing to all men who receive it; it is the unfailing friend and support of the cause of human freedom. It is good for democracies and bad for despotisms; or, at any rate,

whereas the former can scarcely have too much of it, the latter can endure but little. The dogma is accepted that organized education unfailingly enlightens and liberates the mind.

Democracy is a vast and complex cultural achievement in the sphere of human relations and social values. Like all of man's finest achievements, it is extremely delicate and fragile, difficult to maintain at the highest level of excellence and easy to let follow a course of gradual degradation. Democracy exists only in the patterns of behavior, feeling, and thought of a people. Let these patterns be destroyed and democracy itself is destroyed. And they will be destroyed if they are not acquired anew by each generation, acquired by the complicated process of teaching and learning. Much attention is devoted in the schools to insure the mastery by the young of reading, writing, and arithmetic, of technical skills and processes, of the arts and the sciences. This is all very good and necessary. But the mastery of the ways of democracy is a far more difficult task of teaching and learning, and certainly quite as important to free men. The doctrine that children will learn these ways, if left to themselves, is as unsound as the thought that they would master geometry without the help of their elders.

It follows from this analysis of the problem that the survival of every complex society is dependent in part on the moral quality of a program of organized education. If it is to live and prosper, it must have an *appropriate* kind of education—an education that cultivates in the young the peculiar dispositions and powers which distinguish it from other societies.

The American people should pass their entire system of theory and practice under careful scrutiny with a view to bringing it into more complete and direct harmony with the articles of the democratic faith. They should fashion an education conceived in the spirit of that faith and devoted to its defense and further realization—an education designed to prepare their children to guard, to live in, and to develop

a free society. More particularly they should fashion an education frankly and systematically designed to give to the rising generation the loyalties, the knowledge, the discipline of free men. In a word, the American public school, through its life and program, should proceed deliberately to foster and strengthen all those physical, intellectual, and moral traits which are the substance of democracy—to incorporate into the behavior of boys and girls and youth the great patterns of democratic living and faith.

## II.

### THE LOYALTIES OF FREE MEN

THE American people must realize that there are loyalties that set men free as well as loyalties that put them in chains. If their own ancestors had not been moved to place certain values above comfort, security, and even life itself, the foundations of a free society would never have been laid on this continent and the inhabitants of the United States today would possess no heritage of liberty to guard and bequeath to their children. The point cannot be overstressed that democracy, as well as autocracy, has its loyalties, that the strength and vigor of democracy depends on the strength and vigor of these loyalties among its citizens.

The task of cultivating democratic loyalties in the young is a task which the American people have never discharged successfully. At the one extreme there have been those who, in an effort to teach patriotism, have pursued the blind, formal, and uninspiring course of putting the intellect and all the creative faculties to sleep. They have contented themselves with developing superficial loyalties, conveying understanding of neither past nor present, and nurturing the disposition to follow the stereotypes and not the spirit of democracy. At the other extreme there have been those who, reacting against tradition and expressing a spirit of intellectual emancipation, have delighted in shaking old loyalties but have failed to arouse new ones. They have known all of the questions but none of the answers. They have given to the young all of the doubts but none of the affirmations of life. Both the loyalty to stereotypes of the one extreme and the scorn of loyalty of the other, both the neglect of understanding of the former and the one-sided intellectual emphasis of the latter constitute an invitation to the dictator to take over. Under both conceptions education

lacks life, vision, seriousness, deep moral purpose. Neither can be successful in cultivating democratic loyalties in the young.

### *What Are the Loyalties of Free Men?*

The free man is loyal to the values and processes of democracy. The free man is loyal:

- First, to himself as a human being of dignity and worth*
- Second, to the principle of human equality and brotherhood*
- Third, to the process of untrammelled discussion, criticism, and group decision*
- Fourth, to the ideal of honesty, fair-mindedness, and scientific spirit in the conduct of this process*
- Fifth, to the ideal of respect for and appreciation of talent, training, character, and excellence in all fields of socially useful endeavor*
- Sixth, to the obligation and the right to work*
- Seventh, to the supremacy of the common good*
- Eighth, to the obligation to be socially informed and intelligent.*

The entire program of the public school, the materials of instruction, the extracurriculum activities, the methods of administration, the human relations within the institution, and the connections between school and community should be deliberately designed to develop these eight loyalties of free men.<sup>1</sup>

*First, the free man is loyal to himself as a human being of dignity and worth.* The obligation of the school here is to give each pupil a deep feeling of competence, adequacy, and security, to bring each individual under its care to maturity and freedom. This is the first and most fundamental obligation of

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<sup>1</sup> See further: National Education Association and American Association of School Administrators, Educational Policies Commission. *Learning the Ways of Democracy*. Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1940. 486 p.

all democratic education. Through the use of the riches of human association and the great heritage of human culture, the school should extend to every child the opportunity to grow to his full physical, intellectual, and moral stature as a responsible and valued member of a society of equals. It should reject all systems of measurement, classification, or instruction that submerge the individual or pretend to place him in a fixed quantitative relation to another. It should treat every child, regardless of his talents, as a unique and precious personality, a rightful heir to the cultural inheritance, meriting the tender care and solicitude of society. It should explore fully his abilities, develop his creative powers, and encourage him to feel that he can do something of value, that he belongs, that he is wanted. While it should give rich opportunity to the gifted, it should actively discourage every tendency toward arrogance and despotic temper. As it should not debase the weak because of their weakness, so it should not elevate the strong to a superior moral status by reason of their strength. The school should endeavor to arouse in each individual a profound sense of self-respect and personal integrity. It should also encourage him to participate in bestowing upon others this priceless gift of the free person.

*Second, the free man is loyal to the principle of human equality and brotherhood.* He treats his neighbor, as well as himself, as a human being of dignity and worth. In its effort to develop this loyalty in the young the school should first of all arrange its whole life in harmony with the principle. This means that a fraternal and friendly spirit should prevail as fully as possible throughout the organization and conduct of the work of the school and that a condition of equality, sympathy, and kindness should be established everywhere. No discrimination based upon family, race, nationality, religion, politics, or economic status should be tolerated. Differences derived from diverse ancestry, life conditions, or personal aptitude or conviction should be employed, not to found rival and hostile groups, but rather to enrich the common life. Every effort should be

made to fashion a mentality keenly sensitive and deeply hostile to all violations of the principle of equality and brotherhood—to poverty, injustice, ruthlessness, special privilege, denial of opportunity, persecution of minorities, exploitation of the weak, servile relationships; to those social conditions which to-day dwarf the bodies and souls of millions of American children and rob them not only of their democratic heritage, but also of their birthright as human beings. Effort should also be made to instill into the mind of the pupil a sense of responsibility for correcting all such violations. The great ideals of a domestic society of free and equal men, of a world society of free and equal peoples, living under a regime of peace and law should be raised before the young.

*Third, the free man is loyal to the process of untrammelled discussion, criticism, and group decision.* From the kindergarten to the university the school should provide the young with continuous opportunity to engage in this process; to acquire its skills, knowledges, and dispositions; to see clearly its relation to the fate of democratic society. It should assume, moreover, that the thorough mastery of the process constitutes a difficult task of learning and that such mastery is not to be achieved by the easy expedient of permitting children to do as they please. It should recognize that the most careful guidance and tuition are necessary. As the school should cultivate intolerance toward the appeal to prestige or position, hostility toward the exercise of arbitrary power, mistrust of all purely authoritarian pronouncements, so it should cultivate loyalty to the method of rational discussion and deliberation. Within the framework of democratic ideas and procedures it should protect the right of every minority to be heard, of every sincere opposition to oppose, even the most feeble and unpopular. From the life of the school, loyalty should be transferred to the priceless guarantees of the Bill of Rights, to the great liberties of thought, belief, speech, press, assemblage, petition, and organization for which free men have always fought and whose changing fortunes record the rise and fall of the democratic

spirit and faith. The young should be led to see that the suppression of these liberties opens the way to violence, civil war, dictatorship, the end of a society of free men.

*Fourth, the free man is loyal to the ideal of honesty, fair-mindedness, and scientific spirit in the conduct of the democratic process.* The abuse of the process of discussion and criticism may undermine confidence in that process and ultimately lead to its overthrow. To employ discussion for the purpose of arousing passion or of delaying and sabotaging action, to refuse to abide by the decisions of the majority, to engage in the methods of conspiracy under the cloak of democracy, to employ the civil liberties to discredit the Bill of Rights, or to nourish openly or secretly the ideas of violence and dictatorship is to threaten the foundations of a free society. The school should utterly refuse to tolerate such tendencies within its domain and should strive to cultivate in the young a deep and general hostility toward them. While encouraging criticism of institutions, practices, governments, and public persons and officials, it should strive to make criticism informed, honest, and sober. It should operate on the maxim that comment founded on ignorance, gossip, and malice is a threat to the perpetuation of free institutions. It should teach the youth of the nation that the exercise of the democratic liberties should always be attended by a sense of responsibility to the canons of truth and decency. The obligation of organized education here is peculiarly heavy. The school should also inculcate a healthy skepticism toward all final and complete solutions to social problems and generally cultivate a deep regard for the method and spirit of science in the realm of human affairs.

*Fifth, the free man is loyal to the ideal of respect for and appreciation of talent, training, character, and excellence in all fields of socially useful endeavor.* Although free society must always be founded on the principle of human equality, on the principle that every man is entitled to equal opportunity to develop his powers and to equal consideration before the law and in the moral order, it should prize above other societies



every kind of superiority and excellence. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, the "father of American democracy," it should strive both to discover and develop as its richest resource the "natural aristocracy of virtue and talents." Particularly in the great industrial society of today, with its dependence on the accumulation and mastery of precise knowledge and with its highly complex and dynamic life patterns and problems, this human resource should be fully utilized. Clearly the school should keep a perpetual inventory of the abilities of the younger generation, provide the best possible training for those abilities, and impress upon the young the necessity of recognizing and placing in posts of public concern and responsibility persons of the highest talent, training, and virtue. Also the school should stimulate and prize the achievement of excellence in every sphere of life and culture—in production and exchange, in government and politics, in literary and artistic pursuits, in science and technology, in social thought and invention.

*Sixth, the free man is loyal to the idea of the obligation and the right to work.* Implicit in the principle of human equality is the doctrine that every person of sound mind and body should engage in some form of socially useful labor. The school should propagate this doctrine systematically by both precept and example. In the absence of pedagogical considerations to the contrary, the individual pupil should be required to carry his share of the common load in every department of the program. Habits of loafing, of evading tasks, of shifting disagreeable burdens to others should not be permitted. The necessity of labor in human society, from the most primitive to the most advanced, should be emphasized and demonstrated. The popular prejudice that education should furnish an escape from the world of toil, that the educated man is morally entitled to ride on the backs of the untutored, should be thoroughly rooted out of both school and society. At the same time the school should develop a comprehensive system of vocational training, closely linked with the several branches of the economy, which

would be designed to equip the entire younger generation for earning a livelihood. Moreover, as a sense of gratitude toward those who do the work of the world, and particularly the hard, unpleasant, monotonous, and dangerous work, should be instilled into every youngster, so the idea that social parasitism, whether of individuals or classes, is utterly repugnant to the spirit of democracy should be vigorously taught. A comprehensive effort should be made to attach a sense of worthiness and dignity to all forms of socially useful labor. Also the school should teach the young that everyone has a right to work, not necessarily at the kind of work he would prefer, but a genuine right to work nevertheless. This right, necessary to provide a solid economic foundation for individual liberty, should be acknowledged as a basic human right.

*Seventh, the free man is loyal to the idea of the supremacy of the common good.* Because of the conditions under which the American people gained their livelihood for generations the individual has tended to neglect the general welfare and concentrate his energies on the improvement of his own economic position and the advancement of his own personal interests. Even the public school has often been regarded as primarily a road to individual success. The rise of industrial civilization with its close integration and interdependence has made necessary and inevitable an increasing measure of common and cooperative action—an increasing amount of social coordination and direction of the economic and social life. There is every reason for believing that, if the needed coordination and direction cannot be achieved through the processes of cooperation of free men, it will come in the form of more or less harsh dictatorship. The school should do everything possible, therefore, to moderate the egoistic tendencies and strengthen the social and cooperative impulses of the rising generation. To accomplish this purpose it should not only relate its own life and program more closely to the needs and problems of society, but should also take the leadership in extending to children and youth the opportunity of participating in community activ-

ities. All of this calls for the teaching of patriotism in its most enlightened and humane form. The school should organize its resources for the purpose of rearing a generation eager to serve community, nation, and mankind in times of peace as well as war—able, fearless, incorruptible, and loyal.

*Eighth, the free man is loyal to the obligation to be socially informed and intelligent.* Devotion to the common good, however selfless and single-minded, is not enough. Unless accompanied and directed by knowledge and understanding, such devotion may lead to bigotry, to intolerance, and even to the destruction of the foundations of popular liberty. The obligation to know must therefore be one of the deepest and most universal loyalties in a free society. The excuse of ignorance, when the opportunity for knowing exists, cannot be tolerated in a democracy. The free man, if he is to remain free, must command the knowledge necessary to guard his freedom. To this principle there is no alternative.

The responsibility of organized education in developing this loyalty is overwhelming. The next chapter is devoted wholly to this question.

### III.

#### THE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR FREE MEN

KNOWLEDGE has been called the key of liberty. Although the door to liberty cannot be opened with a single key, it certainly cannot be opened without this one. Loyalties alone, absolutely indispensable as they are, cannot do it. Without knowledge men cannot be free; without knowledge men are incapable of distinguishing friends from enemies; without knowledge men can be led into slavery shouting the battle cry of freedom; without knowledge men cannot rule themselves; without knowledge men are blind. The long history of mankind shows that free men again and again have lost their liberties simply because they did not know the consequences of the choices which they were making or accepting. Democracy, therefore, beyond all other social systems and faiths, must make provision for the enlightenment of the people. It must do this or perish.

#### *The Faith in Knowledge*

One of the major articles of the democratic faith is that the human mind can be trusted and should be set free. The road to the liberation of the mind is through knowledge and understanding. Democracy therefore must be devoted, with an ardent and sustained devotion, to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and understanding.

This means first of all that the spirit of inquiry should be sedulously fostered, that the channels of investigation should be kept open, that neither vested rights nor special privilege should be permitted to halt or pervert this process, that generous provision should be made by society for the prosecution of research and study in all fields, that men should be encouraged to abide by the verdict of knowledge.

This article of faith means also that no barriers should be raised to keep knowledge and understanding from the people, that, on the contrary, every effort should be made to bring en-

lightenment to all. Only thus can freedom be preserved and strengthened from generation to generation.

### *The Question of Relevance*

All forms and kinds of knowledge, however, are not equally relevant to the task of serving the cause of political freedom. Even a totalitarian regime, though disseminating a vast amount of falsehood and propagating a distorted view of history, must transmit large bodies of thoroughly dependable knowledge to the young, knowledge that will contribute to the achievement of the purposes of the dictatorship. Through careful selection, knowledge, like loyalties, may assist in producing obedient and efficient slaves of state or despot. A democracy should guarantee to the members of each new generation the knowledge, the insights, and the understandings that will give them power and make them masters of the state and their rulers. It should guarantee them knowledge that will enable them to safeguard and extend their freedom in the contemporary world—knowledge that is relevant to the defense and strengthening of the values, purposes, and loyalties of a society of free men.

### *The Question of Selection*

The selection of such knowledge from the inexhaustible stores available is a task of supreme urgency and difficulty. It is certainly a task that cannot be performed by children or even by a single teacher, however competent and devoted, working in isolation from his colleagues. It can be performed adequately only by pooling the resources of the profession and enlisting the cooperation of all sections of the American community.

### *What Are the Patterns of Social Knowledge?*

The approach to the task of selection should be made in terms of the needs of a free man bent on guarding and extending his liberties. This calls not for the memorization of the dates and episodes of history, nor for an encyclopedic comprehension

of social practices, nor yet for a simple acquaintance with a vast number of current "issues," but rather for insight, understanding, and perspective.

The free man today is familiar with certain great patterns or bodies of social knowledge and thought:

*First, he has knowledge of the nature of man in society*

*Second, he has knowledge of the history of mankind*

*Third, he has knowledge of the long struggle to liberate the human mind and civilize the human heart*

*Fourth, he has knowledge of the nature of the present crisis*

*Fifth, he has knowledge of the totalitarian movements*

*Sixth, he has knowledge of the weaknesses of American democracy*

*Seventh, he has knowledge of the resources, achievements, and promise of American democracy.*

The giving of such knowledge to the young is a responsibility of democratic education.

*First, the free man has basic knowledge of the nature of man in society.* He knows that man is the most variable and versatile creature on the earth; that he lives under the compulsion of imperious appetites and desires; that he is capable of subjecting these cravings to varying degrees of rational control and even of sublimation; that he is endowed with inventive and creative talents of unpredictable import; that he builds cultures and institutions and modes of life which in turn mold and change him, increasing his powers, redirecting his energies, modifying and refining the expression of his primitive appetites, and developing ever new purposes and longings. He knows that, whatever their origins, the motives of man, as he is found in history, are many, diverse, and conflicting; that he is capable alike of heroism and cowardice, selfishness and avarice, mercy and cruelty; that he can engage in the noblest and the meanest of exploits; that he can throw himself with equal ardor into a great crusade for human betterment or into a pogrom or a lynching party, into a movement to build or to destroy, to

rescue or to slay. He knows that man is fated to live in no particular order of social relationships; that he can fashion and sustain both despotisms and free societies; that he can be stirred to action by the scoundrel as well as the saint; that in times of institutional crisis when old ways falter and desires are frustrated he can be led into the most violent and irrational forms of behavior. He knows that with such a creature the defense and advance of human freedom require ceaseless vigilance and are fraught with hazard and uncertainty.

*Second, the free man has basic knowledge of the history of mankind.* He sees the long human adventure in full perspective, from the first appearance of man on the earth down to the present age of industrial civilization. He is familiar with man's long struggle for mastery in the animal kingdom, his wanderings and migrations, and his differentiation into races and peoples; with his record of invention and discovery, his development of the practical arts, and his advances from hunting, fishing, and trapping to agriculture, animal breeding, manufacture, and machine industry; with his creation of language and number, his founding of the great social institutions of family, school, church, and state, his perfection of the arts of war and government, and his building of cities, nations, and empires; with his search for truth, justice, and beauty, his creation of art, religion, science, and philosophy, his efforts to penetrate the mystery of existence, to master his earthly infirmities, to remake the world in the image of his own hopes and ideals. He knows, too, of the wars of classes, sects, and peoples, of the triumphs of despots and madmen, of the heroic struggles against tyranny and oppression, of the succession of social and political systems, of slavery and serfdom in their varied phases, of victory and defeat for human freedom, of progress and catastrophe. He knows the human story in both its darker and brighter shades, those manifestations of stupidity and cruelty which place man beneath the brute as well as those heroic and sublime episodes and achievements which give him the stature of the gods, those tender and selfless acts

and sentiments which make him only a little lower than the angels. He knows the world as it is today, the distribution of natural resources and populations, the diverse patterns of technical and cultural development, the boundaries of nations and relations of peoples, the rise and spread of the new despotisms.

*Third, the free man has basic knowledge of the long struggle to liberate the human mind and to civilize the human heart.* He is at home in the great liberal and humanistic heritage, in the thought and achievements of the thinkers, artists, prophets, and scientists of all ages and countries. He has followed the struggle for freedom of thought, the effort to make the concept of humanity include all peoples and races, and the story of democracy from earliest times. With especial care he has studied the course of the struggle for human freedom on the North American continent—the disintegration of feudal institutions and outlooks, the leveling influence of the frontier, the establishment of the early agrarian democracy, the overthrow of the system of Negro slavery, the immigration of the underprivileged and oppressed of other lands, the rise of organizations of working people. He is familiar also with the struggle to separate church and state, establish the public school, foster humanitarian movements, and overthrow the principles of authoritarianism in various fields. He is fully aware of the great successes of his people. He is equally aware of their failures and of the forces and trends tending to obstruct and divert the march of their democracy.

*Fourth, the free man has basic knowledge of the nature of the present crisis in domestic and world relations.* He knows that this crisis cannot be traced solely or even chiefly to the machinations of evil men, but rather that it is largely a result of profound dislocations in the culture and social structure produced by advances in science and technology. He realizes that these new forces have gradually and ever more rapidly transformed the economy and the underlying conditions of life—bringing in new forms of production and exchange,



increasing the role of capital goods, adding invention to invention and discovery to discovery, harnessing the inanimate forces of nature, creating novel materials and processes, rendering obsolete old occupational skills and knowledges, changing the modes and instruments of warfare, extending the range and speed of communication, widening the reach of the market, breaking down family and community boundaries, destroying the independence of farm and locality, integrating society on an ever vaster scale, producing new class divisions, interests, and conflicts, modifying traditional conceptions of property, reducing the role of competition in the economy, fostering organization and cooperation, placing a premium on planning and control, putting new burdens on government, accelerating the tempo of life, altering the relations of nations, compounding economic crisis and catastrophe, ushering in an age of potential plenty, creating social maladjustments of unprecedented number, intensity, and variety, and generally thrusting men into a world vastly extended, intricate, and overwhelming. Moreover, he sees technology placing such power in the hands of man that he is now able to destroy those natural resources which constitute the basis of human society and even shatter to bits the delicate fabric of civilization itself through the violence of war, revolution, and counter-revolution.

*Fifth, the free man has knowledge of the totalitarian movements.* He knows how the dictators, taking advantage of the misery and anxiety arising out of the domestic and world crisis, held out to their populations the promise of a new heaven and a new earth; how they organized their forces in a drive for power, employing the democratic processes to destroy faith in democracy, arousing bitter hatreds between classes and races, spreading confusion in all ranks and divisions of the population, violating the canons of honesty and fairness, resorting to individual and mass terror whenever possible, and appealing indiscriminately to the vices and virtues of men. He knows how totalitarian parties, entering a democracy from the outside in the guise of a beneficent international

movement, served in actuality as agents of foreign governments, undermining the morale of the people, creating divisions, and promoting treason. He knows also how totalitarian parties, growing out of the domestic soil, exploited the sentiment of patriotism to betray the interests of the people and the cause of freedom.

*Sixth, the free man has knowledge of the weaknesses of American democracy.* He knows that the great changes wrought by technology have gravely complicated the economic foundations of free society, that a strong tendency to concentrate ownership of productive property in fewer and fewer hands is plainly discernible, that an increasingly large proportion of the people have become dependent on others for bread, that unfortunate class cleavages are appearing in American life. He realizes keenly that until these tendencies are corrected democracy will be in peril. He knows also that the far-reaching changes produced by technology have created a condition of severe and chronic instability in the economy. He is familiar with the recurrence of depressions and crises of increasing scope and intensity which throw millions of men and women out of work, restrict the opportunities open to youth, keep the level of production far below its possibilities, and engender a sense of insecurity and anxiety in all ranks of the population. He knows further that the emergence of industrial society, with its vastly extended boundaries and its complicated structure, is placing enormous burdens of understanding and devotion on the shoulders of the ordinary citizen. He wonders whether this citizen will be able to carry such burdens. In a word, the free man knows that American democracy is facing a crisis of unprecedented scope and intensity. He knows and is profoundly concerned.

*Seventh, the free man has knowledge of the resources and promise of American democracy.* He knows that that democracy represents today the hope of the friends of human freedom everywhere. He knows that with its unique heritage of popular liberty, its long experience with free institutions,

its matchless natural riches, its advanced technology, and the energies and talents of its people, it can defend itself against attack from abroad, bring security and relative material abundance to all, and at the same time achieve and give substance to ever higher conceptions of justice, mercy, and beauty. He knows that it is possible to revive for the youth of America a vision of a good society—good for even the humblest citizen—which has been the possession of the American people throughout a good part of their history.

### *The Obligation of the School*

The program here outlined places upon the school the gravest of moral obligations. It entrusts to the teachers, to supervisors and administrators, to members of boards of education, to all who have any part in shaping the materials of instruction, a responsibility of supreme difficulty, urgency, and importance. It gives to these people the opportunity to weaken or strengthen the heritage of human freedom. If knowledge is to liberate the mind, it must be precise and true. To the extent that falsehood and misrepresentation creep into the teaching, organized education betrays the most sacred of trusts and corrupts the springs of democracy. Only the highest standards of devotion and competence, honesty and integrity can be tolerated. Without the slightest desire to deceive or mislead, the school should strive to give to the young the knowledge necessary for free men.

## IV.

### THE DISCIPLINE OF FREE MEN

THE democratic faith is sustained and fulfilled by the discipline of free men. Loyalties and knowledge are not enough. Without discipline, loyalties, however deep and abiding, can avail but little; without discipline, knowledge, however precise and comprehensive, must remain ineffectual and sterile.

#### *The Nature of Discipline*

Discipline means the putting of loyalties and knowledge to efficient use, the ordering of life in the light of understanding and toward the attainment of purpose. It involves the subordination of the near to the remote, of the present to the future, of the lesser to the greater good. It involves the restraint of the impulse of the moment, the regulation of desire, the postponement of satisfaction, the sacrifice of immediate comforts and pleasures, the choice of the harder way when the easier way is open. Discipline is never indulgent; it may be rigorously exacting. But it assumes this severe form, not because there is virtue in severity, but rather because such is the condition of achievement.

The crucial role of discipline in the life of the individual is evident on all sides. Even the most modest success, whatever the standards of judgment, requires labor and sacrifice, the restraint of impulse, and the intelligent coordination and direction of energies toward some chosen goal. Whether the goal is good or bad from the standpoint of a given set of moral values, whether it calls for service to or exploitation of one's fellowmen, whether it is the building of a doll house, the winning of an athletic contest, the robbing of a hen coop, the amassing of a fortune, the organization of a band of criminals, the becoming of a good farmer or carpenter, the cultivation of love or friendship, the defeat of an enemy, the attainment of a political office, or the achievement of eminence in the

arts or the sciences, an appropriate discipline is absolutely essential. In advancing toward any goal, even the most nefarious, more or less rigorous self-denial is required.

The role of discipline in the life of society, though perhaps less evident, is equally crucial. It is with this question of social discipline, moreover, that the present study is primarily concerned. The discipline necessary to sustain and fulfill the democratic faith must be a social discipline.

Every society or group must achieve an appropriate discipline or perish. If it lives wholly in the present, if it shows no regard for the future, if it fails to employ knowledge in guarding its long-time interests, if it can neither frame nor achieve purposes embracing the general welfare, if it is paralyzed by conflicting impulses and passions, it cannot long survive. Without discipline a society suffers decay from within or falls a prey to aggression from without. Without discipline a society, however vast its material possessions or great its membership, is helpless in the presence of crisis.

Psychologically, social discipline is a form, though a peculiarly severe form, of individual discipline. Since the group has no existence apart from its members, those habits and dispositions which constitute social discipline must reside in the individual. The group calls upon the members to sacrifice not only immediate to remote interests, present to future interests, but also personal interests, both immediate and remote, present and future, to the general welfare. In times of great danger this sacrifice may assume the most extreme forms—surrender of property, of loved ones, and even of life itself. Such sacrifice is seen in the mother who toils without thought of self for the welfare of her family, in the boy who refuses to betray the members of his gang, in the citizen who gives hours of labor to the work of his political party, in the statesman who, resisting all temptations to personal aggrandizement, devotes his life to the good of his country and the advancement of mankind. The welfare of every group rests upon a measure of personal sacrifice.

## *How Can Democratic Discipline Be Achieved?*

From earliest times men have experienced great difficulty in achieving the measure and kind of discipline necessary to sustain a free society through the generations. The sources of this difficulty are many. Some inhere in democracy itself; others are found in survivals from preceding ages of bondage; yet others are engendered by the ever changing balance of social and cultural forces. But perhaps the most serious source of difficulty has been the failure of free societies to see the problem clearly and to address themselves to the task of developing in the young the appropriate discipline. The discharge of this task is the third essential part of any program of education for democracy.

The achievement of democratic discipline in the young requires the correction of those deficiencies which are altogether too widely present in American life and character. The chief of these deficiencies are:

- First, misunderstanding of the nature of democracy*
- Second, ignorance of social realities*
- Third, lethargy and indifference regarding the general welfare*
- Fourth, devotion to individual success*
- Fifth, susceptibility to demagoguery*
- Sixth, absence of common loyalties*
- Seventh, undemocratic practices and dispositions inherited from the past.*

The life and program of the school should be directed toward the correction of each of these deficiencies.

*The first deficiency to be corrected is a profound misunderstanding concerning the nature and imperatives of democracy.* It is commonly assumed that democracy is a form of society which guarantees freely and automatically to its members the possession and enjoyment of personal privileges. It is sometimes assumed further that the problem of social discipline does not appear in a democracy, that such discipline is either hostile to the spirit of individual liberty or capable

of being acquired without conscious effort on the part of anybody, that a democratic society very obligingly runs itself and requires of its members merely that they attend strictly to their own private affairs. The school should demonstrate to the young through experience in the community and through study of human history and institutions, that no society, whether bound or free, can long survive the conduct of life in conformity with such misconceptions.

*The second deficiency to be corrected is ignorance on the part of the individual of social realities.* In a free society, where responsibility for great decisions rests upon the ordinary citizen, such ignorance in times of crisis may prove fatal. Let the devotion of the individual to the common good be ever so strong, let his loyalty to all the values of democracy be ever so deep, if he is unaware of imminent difficulties and perils, he will take no action, he will make no sacrifice, he will concentrate on personal interests. The school should direct its program of instruction to the overcoming of this condition of ignorance and to the arousal in the young of a sense of deep concern regarding the future.

*The third deficiency to be corrected is lethargy and indifference regarding the general welfare.* This state of mind tends to be particularly prevalent among persons, both young and old, enjoying security and comfort. Such persons often resent the intrusion into their pleasant world of harsh and disturbing events. They prefer "to take things easy," to enjoy week ends in the country, to put off until tomorrow, to believe that the deluge is not coming, at least not in their time. They are unwilling to pay in time and devotion the full price of liberty. They refuse to accept responsibility for themselves and even become indignant toward those who take seriously their civic duties or who would arouse them from their world of slumbers. They may salve their consciences by resorting to wishful thinking, by convincing themselves that everything is all right, by nourishing the delusion that in any event God is on their side and that "right" is certain to prevail. Many are

perhaps overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task of guiding the destinies of a nation or by a sense of the helplessness of a single individual in the presence of a world in revolution. In this situation the school should endeavor, by precept and practice, to give to every boy and girl a feeling of personal responsibility for participating actively in making, obeying, and enforcing social and community decisions.

*A fourth and closely related deficiency to be corrected is an inordinate devotion to individual success.* If individual success were gauged in terms of service to society, there would, of course, be no problem here. But in American democracy the standards of achievement have tended too largely to be nonsocial or narrowly social in character. In obedience to the doctrine that each individual should mind his own business, that by minding his own business he will contribute most to the general welfare, that the "least government is the best," and that able men should not enter public service, the common interest has been neglected. Worse than that, as the history of political corruption in the United States shows, a large part of the population has come to look upon government as a taker of bribes and a dispenser of favors, as an alien interest to be outwitted and cheated. American democracy today has too few "public men"—too few men who place the welfare of society above or on a par with their personal fortunes. To survive in times of crisis a democracy, more than any other form of society, requires citizens who voluntarily and eagerly offer their services to the community. Through its study of occupations and careers, through its choice of biography, through the conduct of its own life, through its distribution of rewards, the school should strive to alter the current standards of success and achieve a more general devotion to social welfare.

*A fifth deficiency to be corrected is susceptibility to the arts of demagoguery.* From ancient times demagoguery has been one of the most common and fatal diseases of democracy; in these years demagoguery has been employed successfully in one country



after another to destroy free institutions. Ambitious men, thirsting for political preferment and power, flatter the people, applauding their vices and acclaiming their errors, pandering to their prejudices and passions. Even responsible political leaders often hesitate to speak unpleasant truths and make promise after promise that cannot be fulfilled. Rival demagogues, striving to outbid one another in the popular favor, have been known to lead a society from one absurdity to another and eventually to disaster.

The school should reveal to the young the dangers of demagoguery, train them in the detection and repudiation of specious appeals and programs, and rear them in the hard discipline of knowledge and truth.

*A sixth deficiency to be corrected is the absence among the people of common loyalties.* Every great modern democracy is marked by racial, national, religious, and class differences. If these differences flame into hatreds of sufficient intensity, all sense of community of interest disappears and society degenerates into a melee of warring factions. As already noted, demagogues aggravate these differences and hatreds for purposes of personal advantage and the prospective dictator exploits them in his struggle for power. The danger lies in the fact that full democratic discipline requires a conception of welfare that embraces and is felt to embrace all elements of the population. In the measure that this condition disappears, common loyalties and purposes, the basis of the discipline of a free society, are bound to disintegrate.

*A seventh deficiency to be corrected is a pervasive heritage from the past of undemocratic practices and dispositions.* No people has ever developed a completely democratic discipline, as no people has ever established a true democracy. Even in the oldest of the democracies the legacy from a preceding age of human bondage is preserved in a thousand ways. It is evident in the behavior of leaders and those led in politics, in the thirst for power by the few and the worship of power by the many, in the response of millions to the glamor of military

glory and conquest, in the readiness with which multitudes violate and surrender political rights. It is not enough therefore that the school order its own life in accordance with democratic principles. This great institution, through which man deliberately strives to perfect himself, should turn the light of sympathetic criticism and understanding on the life of society and obtain the cooperation of other agencies in the progressive elimination of the undemocratic heritage from the past.

### *The Teaching of Discipline*

At no time in the history of American education has a concerted effort been made to rear a generation in the discipline of free men. Indeed, at no time has the teaching profession been fully aware of the problem. While there has been much talk about discipline, there has been little attempt to relate the discussion to the great purposes of democracy. Opposing schools of thought on the question have generally assumed that in the educative process, as in life, discipline and personal liberty are in conflict. But whereas the one has been inclined to identify education with discipline, the other has tended to associate it with liberty. Though both of these emphases are needed in the schools of a free society, the conception of discipline held by the one group is as deficient as the conception of liberty held by the other.

The first school of thought has believed that discipline must be imposed by an arbitrary and all-powerful authority; the second that it will develop from within in any properly conducted education. The former have believed that men must be disciplined before they can be entrusted with liberty; the latter that they must be freed from all restraining influences before they can achieve the discipline of freedom. The confusion here has arisen from two opposing views of human nature, both of which are fallacious and, in spite of superficial differences, fundamentally alike. Members of the first school, like all supporters of authoritarian doctrine, have assumed that man is evil by nature and must be remade according to a pat-

tern imposed by some external power; members of the second, like all followers of the romantic tradition, have assumed that man is good by nature and should be permitted and encouraged to develop in accord with his own inner tendencies. The fact seems to be that man is neither evil nor good by nature, but rather becomes evil or good, according to a given set of standards, as he grows to maturity in a given society or culture.

The discipline of free men cannot be achieved by subjecting the young for a period of years to the regimen of a slave. Neither can it be achieved by allowing the young to follow their own impulses and take over the process of education. It can be achieved only by living for years according to the ways of democracy, by rendering an active devotion to the articles of the democratic faith, by striving to make the values and purposes of democracy prevail in the world, by doing all of these things under the guidance of the knowledge, insight, and understanding necessary for free men. That this involves a highly complex and difficult process of learning is obvious. It requires a school environment and a school life organized deliberately to give boys and girls experience in democratic living—a school environment and a school life from which the obstacles to the achievement of democratic discipline are removed. Above all, it requires the influence of a teacher who in his activities in both school and community practices the discipline of a free man.

## V.

### FREEDOM AND CONTROL

CONTROL is always a crucial problem of organized education. A given program may be rendered ineffective or even hostile to its avowed purposes by the mode of control adopted. Like loyalties, knowledge, and discipline, the method employed should be in harmony with the fundamental principles and values of the entire educational undertaking.

#### *The Broad Contours of Democratic Education*

The object of a system of school control is to ensure the achievement of purpose and the maintenance through the years of the kind of program desired. An understanding of the nature of the control adapted to the making of free men requires, therefore, a brief review of the broad contours of democratic education in relation to society and culture. These contours may be outlined in the following six characteristics of democratic education:

*First, democratic education is devoted to the realization of the democratic faith*

*Second, it is marked by integrity and honesty in all relations*

*Third, it is sensitive and responsive to the changing conditions of life*

*Fourth, it is independent of the passions and narrowly partisan struggles of the moment*

*Fifth, it is sensitive and responsive to the changing hopes, ideals, and problems of the people*

*Sixth, it is free from the domination of private persons and groups.*

An elaboration of these six characteristics will reveal the conditions that the control of democratic education will be expected to establish and maintain.

*The first characteristic of democratic education has been the center of analysis and exposition throughout this volume; it has, as its all-embracing object, the realization of the democratic faith.* It is not education for dictatorship, for either the old or the new despotisms. Neither is it an education for all orders of society and for all moral systems. It is frankly an education deliberately and systematically designed to defend, strengthen, and more completely realize in America the articles of the democratic faith; to rear a generation of free men equipped with the loyalties, the knowledge, the discipline necessary to enable them to maintain their heritage of freedom and to transmit that heritage in full and growing vigor to their children. It is an education designed to imbue boys and girls and youth with the courage and the determination to struggle for the ever more complete fulfillment of the vision of a society of security, liberty, justice, and beauty for all. It is an education that takes its social obligations seriously and refuses to confine the teaching of democracy to a special subject to be given at a special time by a special teacher. It is an education permeated, colored, and shaped throughout its entire program by the values, the ideas, the spirit of democracy. The task of establishing and maintaining an education of this character in a society beset by the domestic and world forces of totalitarianism requires understanding, inventiveness, and vigilance.

*The second characteristic of democratic education, like the other four still to be considered, is implicit in the first; democratic education is marked by personal integrity and honesty in all relations.* From the relations between the janitor and the superintendent to the relations between the teacher and the pupil, this characteristic represents an application to the work and life of the school of the first and most basic article of the democratic faith—belief in the unqualified worth and dignity of the individual human being. Since the teacher-pupil relation is the vital element in all education, it is imperative that this relationship be marked not only by com-

plete integrity and honesty but also by a spirit of mutual confidence, respect, and even affection. In a democracy this means, above all, that the teacher must express the democratic faith in his life; that he must set an example of probity, fearlessness, and sobriety in both school and community; that he must avoid even the appearance of suppressing knowledge or tempering convictions in response to either reproof or flattery, threats or bribes. The teacher-pupil relation is one of the most sacred relations in a free society. Let this relation be corrupted and the education of free men is rendered impossible. But to achieve and maintain this relation pure and undefiled will unquestionably arouse the opposition of all enemies of democracy.

*Democratic education, in the third place, is sensitive and responsive to the changing conditions of life.* The free man must be prepared to defend and advance his liberties in the world in which he lives and not in some hypothetical world, nor in a world that has passed away, nor yet in all possible worlds. He must know, moreover, that contemporary society, with its sciences and technologies, is highly dynamic, that it is capable of changing even basic structures and patterns with remarkable swiftness. Particularly must he be made familiar through the school with those changes which affect the foundations of American democracy, those deep-flowing currents of the culture and the social order which condition the fortunes of free institutions through the generations. The point to be emphasized here is that while democratic education must avoid absorption in the immediate and fleeting event, it cannot escape into some peaceful Elysium far removed from the struggles of men. It must be closely related to and profoundly influenced by the course of social and cultural change. Particularly must teachers be prepared to reveal to the young with utter candor and realism those trends and tendencies which bring promise or threat to the democratic faith. Indeed, amid the profound and bewildering changes of the age they should help their pupils to find in the great heritage of hu-

man freedom a stabilizing force, an abiding factor, a source of hope, a kind of lode star to give direction and purpose to their lives. This also is likely to encounter hostility on the part of powerful elements in the community.

*The fourth characteristic of democratic education is the complement of the third; although such education is sensitive and responsive to social change, it is at the same time independent of the passions and narrowly partisan battles of the moment and is dedicated to the service of the long-time interests of children and society.* Democratic education, though an integral part of the total social process, does possess an independence, a quality, an integrity of its own. It has its own canons and obligations which must be protected from the heat of the political battle and defended against the encroachments of political personages and parties. It must remain true to its special purposes and obligations. It must ever seek to enlighten, to view in perspective, to keep alive the spirit of reason and understanding, to cultivate the method and outlook of science. Such an emphasis is easily misunderstood even by the friends of democracy. It is sure to be opposed by the foes of human freedom.

*Fifth, democratic education is sensitive and responsive to the changing hopes, ideals, and problems of a people.* It was for the purpose of fulfilling certain hopes, of realizing certain ideals, of solving certain problems of their common life that the American people originally established their system of public schools. It is, moreover, from the hopes, ideals, and problems of the great masses of ordinary men and women that democratic education derives its life. The school, therefore, must make a special effort to keep close to the people—close to farmers, mechanics, clerks, and housewives—close to all who by reason of birth and circumstance have received less than their rightful share of the cultural heritage—close to the humble as well as the proud. If this vital connection is severed, democratic education either enters a period of formalism and decay or, losing its devotion to the cause of human

liberation, becomes the agent of some privileged order or tyranny. This is not to say that democratic education merely awaits the mature formulations of the people, that it has no responsibility to shape and clarify popular hopes, ideals, and problems. It does have just such a responsibility. It should even go beneath the process of clarification and sharpen sensitivity to the conditions out of which issues arise. But the point of central interest here is that teachers, realizing the dynamic quality of the age, should keep themselves in the stream of history, refuse to become a class apart, identify themselves fully with the life of the community, and relate the educational program to the interests of all the people. Here too is a feature of democratic education which is always difficult to maintain and which powerful forces are always tending to submerge.

*The sixth and last characteristic of democratic education to be considered is the complement of the fifth; though sensitive and responsive to the changing hopes, ideals, and problems of the masses of the people, democratic education cannot permit itself to be drawn into the service of any private person or group. It must be free from the immediate domination of any and every minority, class, party, church, sect, or organization bent on using the school or the teacher to promote its special purposes or its special conception of public purposes. Though the school should always be peculiarly sensitive to the correction of injustice and to the improvement of the condition of the underprivileged, its central function is to serve, not the interests of any part of society, but the general welfare. The hazards and difficulties attending the maintenance of this principle in the present age are evident to anyone who reads the newspapers, listens to the radio, or even follows the conversation of street and market place. Every American community, as well as the nation as a whole, literally seethes with "pressure groups" which, speaking in the name of the common good, strive to promote partisan interests and doctrines. Increasingly have these groups sought to shape the pro-*



gram and emphasis of the public school. The right to assemble and organize, to criticize, advocate, and petition is, of course, one of the most precious rights which a democracy guarantees to its citizens. This right, however, creates conditions which complicate and make difficult the conduct of a program of education for democracy.

### *Democratic Education and the Will of the Majority*

The dilemma of public education in a democracy derives not from the pressures of minorities, embarrassing and dangerous though they may be, but from the unqualified exercise of authority by the articulate majority. The widespread belief that the assumption of power over the school by popular government (which presumably expresses the collective judgment and will of the citizens) automatically removes all difficulties, requires very critical examination. Of equally doubtful validity is the belief that democratic education may be regarded as any education which the people, operating through political institutions, may happen to desire or approve. If the analysis of the present volume and of the immediately preceding paragraphs is sound, these beliefs are not to be trusted. The touchstone of democratic education is to be found by no means in the simple assent or assertion of a majority but rather in its power to preserve and advance the cause of democracy. If an educational program undermines the loyalties of free men, fails to give the knowledge necessary to the defense of human liberty, or cultivates an authoritarian discipline or no discipline at all, it cannot be called democratic even though approved by overwhelming popular majorities. The fact that a people may have the power or the legal right to establish a school program which will eventually lead to the abolition of that power or right only makes the problem more acute and urgent. If a democracy is to have democratic education, the school must be protected not only against the assaults of minorities but also from the caprice and ignorance

of the majority. A central task of democratic education is to educate a democracy to desire, to support, and to defend a program of democratic education.

The difficulty arises from a conception of government which democracies have inherited from ancient and modern despotisms. Under this conception, which is to be found in its pure form in contemporary dictatorships, government is all-powerful, all-wise, and all-good, justified in doing whatsoever it wills within the orbit of its rule and incapable of making a mistake or committing a wrong. To this government the inhabitants are subjects who find the meaning of life in obeying its commands. Although the democracies have generally repudiated the harsher features of this conception and introduced safeguards of personal liberty, they have failed to develop a wholly satisfactory conception of their own. The fact that in a democracy the inhabitants are supposed to be free men who control government in their own interest and employ its agencies to serve their purposes seems to have created confusion. In practice friends of democracy have not rejected wholly the totalitarian doctrine that government can do no wrong. If it is founded in some way on the expressed will of the people, they are inclined to assume that all of the conditions essential to the guarding of human liberty are satisfied. This position is fundamentally unsound.

This crucial problem is brought to focus in the field of education. If a democratic society is a society of free men who direct government to the service of their purposes, the exercise of governmental authority over the schools and thus over the minds of the citizens constitutes something of a contradiction. The danger is ever present that a government of the moment or of a generation will employ this power to change the mentality of a people and convert free men into subjects. If no limits to its action are recognized or respected, there is always the possibility that democratically established government, through the prescription of educational programs and the suppression of thought and the spirit of inquiry, may

gradually mold the character of a people according to the totalitarian pattern. The fact that it might do this with the purest of motives and in the name of freedom would not affect the consequences. The essence of the matter is that it would drive from the school that integrity of person which is perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the free man and without which education cannot serve democratic purposes. The removal of the danger inhering in governmental control of education requires the repudiation of the totalitarian conception and the general acceptance in theory and practice of a government of limited power and jurisdiction.

This brings the analysis to the question of ultimate authority and loyalty. From the standpoint of education, human liberty, and personal integrity, here is the most fundamental distinction between democracy and despotism. In a totalitarian state the authority of government is unlimited and is concentrated in the dictatorial power, whether that power be a person, a family, a class, a political party, a military caste, or a holy order. To this power the individual is required to give unqualified and uncritical loyalty; from its decisions and commands, however capricious, he has no recourse. In a living and enduring democracy the authority of government is limited. It is limited by laws, constitutions, and precedents, by institutional arrangements and accepted procedures, even by the prevailing ideas of a people. Also the loyalty of the citizen is qualified. It is qualified by the legalizing of criticism and opposition, by the conception of government as an instrument and servant of the general welfare, by a body of ideals and values which transcend the authority of officials and practices. Whatever may be the incidence of brute power, the individual in a democracy may claim the moral right to appeal from the acts of government to the guarantees of the laws, from the guarantees of the laws to inherited conceptions of right and wrong, and even from inherited conceptions of right and wrong to the voice of his own conscience. Free men

know that government can do evil—that it can commit the most terrible crimes recorded in history.

The solution of the problem of control of education is not to be found in the transfer of all power to the institutions and officers of government. Such a solution, even though the state is responsive to the general will, constitutes a wholly inadequate safeguard of the education of free men. While the voice of the people has been called the voice of God, man's experience with popular rule demonstrates the falsity of this ancient maxim. Government must, of course, play a major role in the organization and conduct of education. Indeed, adequate provision in the modern age for this great service is utterly impossible through reliance upon private enterprise and resources. But at present the ordinary American citizen possesses no adequate conception of the complex body of relations involved in the establishment and maintenance of a program of education dedicated to the realization of the democratic faith. The control of such a program must express a delicate adjustment among the agencies of government, the profession of teaching, and the people.

## VI.

### GOVERNMENT, THE TEACHER, AND THE PEOPLE

CONTROL of democratic education should be lodged completely with no single authority. The power of any one body or agency to shape a process so central to the development of free men should always be subject to effective limitations. Although ultimate decisions must inevitably rest in some way with society as a whole, the conduct of the public school should involve the close interaction and cooperation of government, the teacher,<sup>1</sup> and the people. If this cooperation is to be most effective and fruitful, it must express in the fullest possible measure a general condition of mutual trust and understanding rather than a precarious balance of rival and jealous forces. To each party thus involved in the control of public education—to government, to the teacher, and to the people—belong appropriate responsibilities and obligations.

#### *Responsibilities and Obligations of Government*

The fundamental responsibility of government is to establish and maintain from generation to generation the broad conditions under which the education of free men may be carried on. Having set the framework within which the work of the school may be conducted, government should guard this framework and guarantee to the teaching profession and the educational authorities freedom and opportunity for the intelligent and loyal discharge of their duties, intervening directly only in case of evident breach of trust. This, rather than the detailed development, administration, and supervision of the program of education, is the responsibility of democratic

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<sup>1</sup> The term "teacher" as employed here and elsewhere in this discussion embraces all members of the educational profession whether engaged in instruction, supervision, or administration.

government. In discharging this obligation government should:

*First, establish a special authority for the general conduct of the public school*

*Second, provide generous and sustained financial support of the educational undertaking*

*Third, insure the broad, thorough, and democratic training of the teacher*

*Fourth, safeguard the integrity of the teacher*

*Fifth, refuse deliberately to make full use of its own power over the school.*

*The first responsibility of government is the establishing of a special authority for the general conduct and supervision of the school.* The primary object of such a measure is to dissociate education from the fortunes of partisan politics, protect it in some degree from the passions of the moment, identify it with the more abiding interests of society, make it an object of especial solicitude on the part of the people, and thus give to it a unique status among governmental functions so that it may operate according to the canons of democratic education and serve most effectively the cause of free men. In originally setting up special boards to outline broad policies and watch over the public school, the American people revealed a sound instinct and a remarkable perception of the realities in the situation. From the standpoint of the fortunes of democracy, organized education plays a peculiar and exalted role. More than any other creature of government it serves the more distant future. The consideration to be given supreme emphasis here, however, is that democratic education as outlined in this volume cannot be conducted successfully under the threat of police power. It can be so conducted only when guaranteed a large measure of independence and security.

*A second responsibility of democratic government is to provide generous and sustained financial support for organized education.* This is required, first of all, by the basic articles of the democratic faith. According to that faith, the cultural

heritage of mankind, the heritage that makes possible the intellectual and moral development of the individual, belongs to all men and not to any privileged order or race. Since the public school is society's special agency for opening the doors of this heritage to the young, it must be made generally and evenly accessible to all. The loyalty of a people to the democratic faith can perhaps be gauged most readily and effectively by its effort, in bad times as well as good, to equalize the opportunities of organized education and assure to every child his full birthright as a human being. A second and equally compelling motive for providing generous and sustained material support for the public school is social necessity—to meet the threat of despotism, to build the spiritual defenses of democracy, to insure so far as possible that the entire population shall acquire the loyalties, master the knowledge, and achieve the discipline of free men.

*Provision for the broad, thorough, and democratic training of the teacher constitutes a third responsibility of government.* The selection and preparation of those who are to be entrusted with the immediate conduct of the public school constitute an undertaking of the deepest gravity. Only the choicest young men and women should be admitted to training—young men and women of fine human quality and reared in the tradition of democracy. Besides embracing technical preparation equal in thoroughness to that required by the most exacting of the professions, the program of training should make careful provision for equipping these young people to discharge the heavy social obligations of the teacher. It should give to them, not only the narrower skills and knowledges of the calling, but also in exceptional measure the loyalties, the understandings, the discipline of free men. It should communicate to them the full scope of their opportunities and responsibilities as teachers of democracy; it should imbue them with a sober and inspiring conception of their profession. Such a program of training should be provided for all teachers and particularly

for those who aspire to positions of leadership in the educational system. Only if government recognizes the seriousness of this problem and establishes the rigorous and appropriate type of training here suggested can the American public school be expected to serve the cause of democracy fully and effectively.

*A fourth responsibility of democratic government is to safeguard the integrity of the teacher and to encourage him to grow to his full stature.* Government should guarantee to the teacher of proven worth a just wage, economic security, reasonable tenure, opportunity for continued study, and protection from the assaults of all busybodies and pressure groups seeking to impose upon him and the school their special and peculiar brands of morals and patriotism. It should guarantee to him the right to search without hindrance for the truth and to convey truth as he finds it, in conformity with the canons of good teaching, to his pupils. It should guarantee to him the right to share in shaping educational programs and policies and in setting the conditions of his work.<sup>1</sup> It should guarantee to him the right to live the life of a full-fledged citizen, to participate actively in the political, social, and cultural life of his time, to enjoy all the privileges and discharge all the obligations of a free man. It should guarantee to him the right to organize with his fellows and thus to make the collective voice of the profession heard in the councils of the local, state, and national community. In order that these guarantees may be respected and enforced, government should provide for the creation of appropriate tribunals before which all grievances may be presented and adjudicated. And it should provide the measures here outlined for safeguarding the integrity of the teacher, not in the interest of teachers, but in the interest of the education of free men. If boys and girls and youth are not brought under the influence of men and women of the

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<sup>1</sup>See further: National Education Association and American Association of School Administrators, Educational Policies Commission, *The Structure and Administration of Education in American Democracy*. Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1938. 128 p.



finest type, truly democratic education is not possible. If the American people desire to defend the democratic faith against assault from within or without, they can scarcely pay too high a price to place such men and women in the public schools of the country.

*A final responsibility of democratic government in the realm of organized education is to restrain itself and refuse to make full use of its power.* It should of course observe meticulously the canons of simple honesty and decency, refusing to be a party to the prostitution of the needs of the school to the granting of favors, the building of private fortunes, and the founding of political machines. Beyond this it should resist the tendency, almost universal in the sphere of government, to increase and extend its authority—to prescribe the details of the educational program, to select textbooks and pass upon the methods of instruction, and to usurp gradually the functions and responsibilities of the profession. Democratic education cannot live in a strait jacket; it refuses to respond to threats and commands; it requires opportunities for deliberation and choice; it thrives only under conditions of trust and confidence. While guarding education from the pressures and encroachments of other forces, government should not make the mistake of imposing a host of its own regulations and prescriptions. Rather should it use its great power to guarantee to the public school the freedom essential to the organization and conduct of education for democracy.

### *Responsibilities and Obligations of the Teacher*

With freedom go corresponding obligations. The state can establish and maintain the conditions under which the education of free men is possible. It is powerless itself to provide such education. To make the possibility actual is the responsibility and the opportunity of those who work in the school. In order that the teacher may discharge the responsibility and rise to the opportunity thus indicated he must:

*First, maintain a steadfast loyalty to the democratic faith*  
*Second, achieve and sustain high professional competence*  
*Third, participate actively and intelligently in shaping educational policy*  
*Fourth, establish and maintain a condition of mutual trust, understanding, and sympathy with the people.*

*The first responsibility of the teacher is to maintain a steadfast and informed loyalty to the values and processes of democracy, to the several articles of the democratic faith, to the interests of children and the cause of human freedom. He should see clearly that education is more than subjectmatter, that education is fundamentally an adventure in human relationships. He should see too that education is not a neutral process and should recognize the far-reaching social, political, and moral implications and consequences of all that he undertakes. In the work of the school and in the life of the community he should exemplify the spirit of democracy. He should struggle without ceasing to apply the articles of this great faith to both education and society. He should be among the first to sense violations of the principles of democracy, to apply these principles to neglected fields, to keep alight the lamps of reason, to champion the interests of the underprivileged and the downtrodden, to combat the forces of totalitarianism, whether of domestic or foreign origin—to make democracy work. In a word, he should take democracy seriously and strive to make it prevail in the world, giving himself fully to its service and enlisting at every opportunity the energies and enthusiasms of his pupils. An example of democracy in his own life, he would exert upon the young a powerful and lasting influence for human freedom.*

*The second responsibility of the teacher is to achieve and sustain a high level of professional competence, to take full advantage of the facilities for study and growth provided by society. Besides mastering the technical aspects of his calling, the teacher should strive to achieve a deep understanding of*

the nature, history, fortunes, and present condition of democracy in America and the world. At the same time he should endeavor to see his calling in relation to the defense and further realization of the democratic faith. He should sense in teaching something more than a mode of gaining a livelihood, something more than a matter of hours, wages, and conditions of work, something more even than a career suited to his tastes and pursued amid pleasant and stimulating associations and surroundings. While resisting stoutly all efforts on the part of either privileged groups or the general public to exploit him, he should see teaching as an opportunity to achieve moral purpose in his own life, to participate effectively in a vital social undertaking, to labor and fight in the great tradition of human freedom, to serve his people creatively in one of the most critical and dynamic ages of history. The discharge of the duties associated with such a calling demands a level and quality of competence which no body of teachers anywhere in the world has ever fully achieved. But never before has any society faced squarely the problem of the education of free men.

*A third responsibility of the teacher is to participate actively in shaping educational policy and providing educational leadership for community, state, and nation.* He should be ready at all times to devote time, energy, and thought to improving the program of the school and to working for the removal of inequalities in educational opportunity. In the struggle to abolish autocratic procedures in the conduct of education inherited from the past, he should be prepared not only to enjoy the privileges of greater freedom but also to assume all necessary responsibilities, however arduous and disagreeable. Thus, if he works, as he should, for increased security for members of his calling, he should at the same time advocate, devise, and support measures necessary for the improvement or the removal from the schools of poor and incompetent workers. If the organized profession ever degenerates into a defender of its own vested interests, it will insure the bankruptcy of

democratic education. Participation in the shaping of educational policy, moreover, should be regarded, not as a privilege to be enjoyed at the option of the teacher, but as an inescapable obligation to discharge. The ultimate success of democratic education depends on the readiness and the competence of the ordinary teacher to recognize and discharge such obligations.

*A final responsibility of the teacher is to establish a condition of mutual trust, understanding, and sympathy, not only with community leaders and representatives, but with all the people.* He should realize fully that here is the only trustworthy support of the democratic faith, that, if by reason of ignorance or sloth the people fail, all hope for a society of free men must perish from the earth. As he should take advantage of every opportunity to establish close and friendly relations with parents and citizens, so he should resist every tendency to erect barriers between himself and the community. He should refuse to identify himself with any narrow group or class, to assume a position of social or intellectual superiority, to nourish the pretensions and the snobbishness which have sometimes characterized the "educated." He should manifest that natural and unaffected spirit which is both a requisite of learning and a badge of the truly educated, as it is one of the first evidences of wisdom. Having established himself in the trust and confidence of the community, he will then be able to make of the school a vigorous and effective instrument of American democracy.

### *Responsibilities and Obligations of the People*

The people—the public, the citizens, the parents—are not without heavy responsibilities and obligations in the establishment and maintenance of a program of democratic education. Quite apart from their relations to government they have duties to discharge. In a democracy public education, like politics, is bound by the cultural, civic, and moral abilities and qualities of the people. Indeed they constitute both the

basic source and the final judge of the program of the school. Although they may be misguided and perverse, there can be no appeal from their decisions. The major responsibilities of the people are threefold:

- First, to achieve a more adequate understanding of the nature of democratic education*
- Second, to guard public education against attacks*
- Third, to establish and maintain a condition of mutual trust, understanding, and sympathy with the teacher.*

*The first responsibility of the people is to achieve a more adequate understanding of the nature of the problem of rearing a generation in the democratic faith.* In spite of their long and deep devotion to the public school, they have never, as already indicated, seen this problem clearly and comprehensively. Molded by conceptions prevailing before the emergence of their own democracy, they have been content with practices and outlooks unsuited and even hostile to the education of free men. Today, after a full century of experience, their ideas about this crucial enterprise remain defective and inadequate. They do not yet see that democratic education possesses a peculiar quality which can be attained only under very special conditions. The establishment of such conditions—conditions which have been outlined in the foregoing pages—is an obligation which they cannot leave with safety to any organized minority or to the institutions of government. The entire argument of the present volume therefore is addressed quite as much to the American people as to the members of the teaching profession.

*The second responsibility of the people, having achieved the necessary understanding, is to guard public education against attacks from powerful and interested minorities.* This they must take their civic obligations in relation to it of the school far more seriously than they have been doing in the past. They must inform themselves on the endeavor to place on boards of education persons who understand the meaning of education for democracy and a

to give that meaning substance. They must be alert to all efforts on the part of groups and organizations to pervert the process of tuition to their special purposes and be ready to support the constituted authorities in the discharge of their duties. This is difficult, but it is not enough. Something far more difficult is necessary. They must practice self-control. They themselves must refrain from ill-considered attempts to run the public school.

*The third responsibility of the people is to establish and maintain a condition of mutual trust, understanding, and sympathy with the teacher.* Their obligation here is no less than that of the profession. They should know that in the measure that this bond is broken, in the measure that the teacher is made to feel himself an alien in the community, the school cannot serve as an agency for the education of free men. They should see that personal integrity is an indispensable qualification for anyone who would serve as guide and counselor of the young in a democracy. Particularly should they exercise caution and forbearance in believing charges of disloyalty sometimes made by uninformed and malicious persons and groups against members of the profession. Being drawn from practically all ranks of the population and having been reared under the influence of American life and institutions, teachers as a class are thoroughly representative of their people and deeply devoted to the ideals and interests of their country. Parents and citizens, therefore, if they believe in democratic education, should be quick to give to the teacher the confidence essential to the encouragement of honest and thoughtful instruction. In the relations between school and community a spirit of tolerance and charity is required from both sides.

# BOOK III

## THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY





## I.

### THE NATURE AND SOURCES OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES<sup>1</sup>

#### *Educational Objectives Depend on a Scale of Values*

EVERY statement of educational purposes, including this one, depends upon the judgment of some person or group as to what is good and what is bad, what is true and what is false, what is ugly and what is beautiful, what is valuable and what is worthless, in the conduct of human affairs. Objectives are, essentially, a statement of preferences, choices, values. These preferences are exercised, these choices made, these values arranged in a variety of ways.

#### *Educational Purposes Are Rooted in the Life of a People*

The purposes of schools and other social agencies are not "discovered" as a prospector strikes a gold-mine. They evolve; they reflect and interact with the purposes which permeate the life of the people. In each of the phases of individual and social living, there are elements which people commend, others which they condemn. Such judgments are based, in the last analysis, on moral standards or ideals. That which, out of their intelligence and experience, the people declare to be good, they will attempt to maintain and perpetuate for the benefit of their children and their children's children. They strive through education to transmit what they think is good to all the generations to come.

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<sup>1</sup>The terms "aim," "purpose," and "objective" are used here interchangeably.

## *The Objectives of Schools Are a Form of Social Policy*

A society which exalts force and violence will have one set of educational aims. A society which values reason, tranquility, and the paths of peace will have another and very different set. Again, a society which worships its ancestors and blindly reverences the past will have and does have different educational purposes from a society which recognizes the necessity for adjustment and change. The educational objectives in each case rest on certain ideas of good and bad, but these ideas are different in each case and lead to aims for the schools which differ from one another as the day from the night.

Educational purposes, then, are a form of social policy, a program of social action based on some accepted scale of values. Since the application of these values varies from place to place and even from day to day, detailed purposes of education can never be developed so as to be universally applicable and perpetually enduring. Constant study and revision are required to keep them meaningful to the people and effective in the schools. Only the broadest lines of policy can have more than temporary and local application, but these controlling principles are of prepotent importance. Everything, in fact, depends upon them.

The early Protestant sects believed it morally necessary that each person acquire salvation in a certain way. Once this moral decision was made, certain educational purposes followed. It was thought necessary, for instance, that each person consult the Bible at first hand. Hence each person must learn to read. Given these premises, the subsidiary purpose of literacy followed inevitably. Today, everyone takes instruction in reading as a matter of course. Yet a moment's consideration will show that such instruction is not justified by the sheer act of reading itself, but rests upon such considerations as religious necessity, or good citizenship, or personal enjoyment. The controlling purpose represents a choice of values.

This illustration suggests that many influences determine the

scale of values cherished by a people. The development and continuing revision of this scale, and the consequent statements and revisions of educational purposes, require attention to the conditions and trends of social and economic life, of practical efficiencies, and of ethical principles.

### *The Conditions and Trends of Society Must Be Considered*

Educational objectives, if they are to be of significant practical value, must not be established in defiance of known or ascertainable facts concerning the economic and social situation as it is and as it may become. The values cherished by individuals and by social groups are the product of experience and may be changed by the same force which created them. In this realm every effort must be made to substitute tested truth for ignorance and hunches. Every major change in the structure of human society from tribal government to nationalism and from chattel slavery to capitalism has been accompanied by profound changes in educational purposes. A clear and exact knowledge of the status and direction of any culture is indispensable to a statement concerning its educational purposes.

### *Social Values Vary in Application*

The principles which guide any society in establishing its objectives and those of its educational systems are usually simple, deep-rooted, and persistent. But the approved conduct which conforms to these principles is necessarily complex, variable, and transient. New social and technological developments change the mode of applying ethical principles to conduct. Vital decisions change with racial experience. Constant re-applications of the scale of values to specific problems are necessary.

Thus, the simple distinctions between *mine*, *thine*, and *ours* which sufficed for the conduct of life in more primitive times, become immensely complicated in a society marked

by entrepreneurial profits, holding companies, international finance, and corporate ownership. The desirability of making the distinctions persists; the practical difficulties in so doing are multiplied and perplexing.

### *The Methods of Effective Teaching and Learning Should Be Sought and Utilized*

Scientific studies of the process of education itself affect the nature of educational objectives. Such studies may ascertain the degree to which given objectives are acceptable to the public, to the profession, or to any segment thereof. They may discover how universally or how perfectly the objectives are or have been attained by any person or group of persons. They may measure the positive or negative contributions made to the objectives by the schools or by other social agencies. They may compare and evaluate the relative efficiency of various educational agencies, methods, or materials in approaching the objectives. They may throw light on the nature of man as learner and teacher and thus color the entire policy of education.

### *Ethical Judgments Control the Application of Other Standards*

The most potent and universal bases for determining educational objectives, however, are those which deal with ethical or moral distinctions.

Consider a single example. Schools are expected to promote a desirable present and future family life for the children in their care. But why is this purpose given prominence? Clearly, it is emphasized because people generally believe that the home and the family are wholesome institutions, capable of contributing to a good and significant life. If we thought that the home was an unimportant or worthless institution, we would not include education for home life among our educational purposes.

This purpose of the school is frequently summarized in the phrase "worthy home membership." Again, what is *worthy* home membership? The objectives of the school in this area acquire concrete meaning only when that word "worthy" is defined. This definition must be made, ultimately, upon an ethical basis. We have all known families ruled by a stern, personal, yet not unkindly autocracy. Many look with favor on this type of home membership. Others believe in a more democratic family regime. Whichever party is right, it is clear that the two types of home membership are quite different and that each would require a different education. Which of them is the worthy one? Or are both unworthy? The answer to these questions involves a choice of values, essentially ethical or moral in nature. And that ethical choice determines the real purpose of the school in this regard.

This conclusion is reinforced as we examine the other great areas in which the schools operate. We are told that the schools ought to develop *good* citizens, possessing ethical character, who make a *worthy* use of their leisure time. But what is good, ethical, or worthy?

Every nation is interested in education for "good" citizenship. But the ethical decision as to what is "good" in this field produces widely variant and indeed opposing practices at different times and in different parts of the world. A *good* American citizen, we think, is humane, just, and restless under restraint. But these same qualities may be the marks of a very unacceptable or *bad* citizen in the cultures of other times and places.

Quantitative and other scientific studies of current social problems and social trends, as well as of the nature of the learning process, are of great value in helping to direct social policies. Equally important in the selection of either social or educational policies is the way in which facts are related to issues and the interpretations placed upon the facts. Science can help us to determine what the facts are, but it has no answer to the question as to whether existing conditions *ought*

to be changed or perpetuated. Science, physical or social, declares, "These things are so." Ethics alone lifts a finger to the things that ought to be.

## II.

### THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

#### *The Social Policy of America is Democracy*

WE have seen that before the objectives of education at any point of time and place can be stated, people must decide which of several possible social policies are to claim their allegiance. We have seen also that this decision hinges primarily upon certain fundamental judgments of values. The social policy thus accepted and endorsed by the American people is the continued striving toward the democratic ideal. A general description of democratic ways of living is, therefore, an indispensable part of our statement of educational purposes.

Democratic living is a developing and complex process in which certain great elements stand out in bold relief. This chapter attempts to sweep into a few broad generalizations these minimum essentials of democracy.

#### *The General Welfare*

Democracy prizes a broad humanitarianism, an interest in the other fellow, a feeling of kinship to other people more or less fortunate than oneself. One who lives in accordance with democracy is interested not only in his own welfare but in the welfare of others—the general welfare.

#### *Civil Liberty*

Democratic behavior observes and accords to every individual certain "inalienable" rights and certain inescapable corollary responsibilities. One who lives in a democratic way respects himself. And to self-respect he adds respect for the moral rights and feelings of others, for the sanctity of each individual personality.

### *The Consent of the Governed*

Democratic processes also involve the assent of the people in matters of social control and the participation of all concerned in arriving at important decisions. This implies that all the people must have access to the facts which will help them to reach a wise decision.

### *The Appeal to Reason*

Peaceful and orderly methods of settling controversial questions are applied by a democracy to matters of national and international policy as well as to private disputes. The callous use of force and violence is rejected as unworthy of a civilized people.

### *The Pursuit of Happiness*

Finally, democracy sets high value upon the attainment of human happiness as a basis for judging the effectiveness of social life.

We are to examine each of these five ideals of democratic conduct, seeking from them to derive a general understanding of the purposes of our schools. It is desirable to preface this examination by a brief sketch of some aspects of the development of democracy in this country and of its present status in the world.

### *Democracy and Education Have Developed Together*

The natural environment of America has been unusually congenial to liberty, yet we have never been entirely free from arrogance, intolerance, and despotism. Long before 1776 battles for democracy were fought. Traditions of distinction as between the rich and the poor, the educated and the ignorant, the governing and the governed, were imported by the early settlers along with their household goods. More than one group, learning nothing of sympathy through its own persecution,



sought America's shores, in the words of the earnest young clergyman, "in order to worship God in our own way and compel all others to do the same." Many a European "gentleman" crossed the Atlantic with full intent to make himself a landlord over wide domains and to enrich himself at the expense of other immigrants whose passage he paid. The craftsman came, with what amounted to a monopoly on his particular kind of training in a country where craftsmen were scarce, with the clear determination to bring himself to power and riches through the work of his apprentices.

Education in the Colonies, reflecting these influences, was primarily the support of various authoritarian groups. In New England, where public education began, it was the bulwark of a Protestantism which dictated its content, methods, and general administration. Other religions, too, founded their own schools. The wealthy landlord hired private teachers to instruct his own children and grudgingly established inferior charity schools for the poor. In the towns and small farms along the Eastern Seaboard the "bound boy" fared a little better. The apprenticeship system, however, was the nearest approach to universal education which America could claim for nearly two centuries.

Such educational arrangements were a far cry from the schools of today. There has been a ceaseless struggle for the extension of education to all. The wresting of educational opportunity from those who found it a convenient means of perpetuating a religious belief, and from others, more worldly-minded, who gained monetary advantage from the limitation and restriction of educational opportunity, fills many stirring pages of history.

### *Democratic Schools Arose from American Conditions*

Changes in the objectives of education which our forefathers imported from Europe were inevitable. The influence of

frontier and wilderness, the substantial economic and social equality of the people began to break down Old World class barriers. Colonists of the second generation began to demand genuinely American schools—schools which would educate their children for their day and location. The inadequacy of the traditional schools was slowly undermining them. Many a growing boy—girls were then little considered—found no school equipped to teach him what he most needed and hence was obliged to study outside any school. Many another was financially unable to pay for the education provided. The ideas gained by these young people naturally reflected the influences of life as it was lived in America rather than life in the atmosphere of the classical schoolroom. Finally, the isolated schools of each state were welded into systems of public education—free, tax-supported and open to all, of whatever creed or condition. At last a universal education, deemed suitable and necessary for the citizens of a democracy, was envisioned. But the battle to keep free schools politically, economically, and intellectually free goes on.

The public schools were launched a century ago under conditions entirely dissimilar to those of today. Never since the development of primitive agriculture, say the experts, have such revolutionary changes occurred in the basic activities of life. It has been said that the founding fathers were nearer to the age of Confucius than we are to them. Their schools were located in the open country or in small towns. People were relatively independent and self-supporting. They owed their bread and their shelter to no one but themselves or to friends and neighbors who were equally indebted to them. No group or individual was in position to demand individual liberty in exchange for the necessities of life.

### *Science and Invention Have Created Social Tensions*

But today a new social force of incalculable strength has disrupted the rural civilization that founded our democracy.

The independent, self-sufficient farmer has been succeeded in many cases by an industrial employee, dependent for livelihood on persons who may have no direct interest in him as a human being and who may recognize no responsibility for his welfare. A new industrial society is here. New means are found for developing and using the resources of nature. Machinery of every sort multiplies the strength of man a thousandfold, sees and hears more keenly than any human senses, and surrounds us by a material and social environment unlike anything known by any people of the past. It is clear that if democracy is to function effectively under these new conditions, new requirements must be met. Just as *religious* domination over the purposes of public education once made room for considerations of *personal economic gain* and *political efficiencies*, so now *social adjustments* arising from the developing technology urgently demand attention.

It is scarcely necessary to pause to document the foregoing statements. Everyone can testify to the changes made in his own habits of living by scientific discoveries and their applications in industry, medicine, or homemaking. In the literature of the day these trends are convincingly summarized. We are told that approximately one and one-half million new patents were granted during the first third of the twentieth century. Invention on such a scale, even though many of the patents are of negligible importance, must be accompanied by social adjustments or it will be followed by social collapse. Our food, our travel, our communications, our very lives now depend on an intricate network of technological processes. A machine has no philosophy of life, no organs, senses, affections, or passions. Largely because the social consequences of scientific advances have not been anticipated or met, we witness economic depression, technological unemployment, desolating wars, and confused loyalties.

## *Science and Invention Must Serve Humanity*

The gap between traditional social processes and the material phases of life widens daily. Many social institutions of today are poorly prepared to meet the demands and make the adjustments required. Inventions designed to save time, energy, and health and to increase productivity are somehow followed by unemployment, occupational diseases, and scarcity of the necessities of life. These are the manifestations of a culture in which material progress has outpaced social control and individual character. At the present time, humanity, not the machine, is having to make the required adjustments. New wine ferments menacingly in old bottles. These tensions can be resolved only through the application of intelligence and goodwill. A new birth of freedom—freedom which is effective in an industrial culture—is required. Technology places in our hands the means of freeing ourselves from scarcity. This great and novel efficiency must be made to serve the ideals and purposes of democracy.

The time ripens for a new companionship between ethics and science. An eminent biologist, in the 1937 presidential address<sup>1</sup> before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, puts the issue succinctly: "As scientists we are inheritors of a noble ethical tradition. . . . The profession of the scientist, like that of the educator or religious teacher, is essentially altruistic and should never be prostituted to unethical purposes. To us the inestimable privilege is given to add to the store of knowledge, to seek truth not only for truth's sake but also for humanity's sake, and to have a part in the greatest work of all time, namely, the further progress of the human race through the advancement of both science and ethics." As this call is heeded, democracy and science will succeed together. The records of the past strongly suggest that the great advances in scientific inquiry have been coeval with the great periods of democratic ferment.

<sup>1</sup> Conklin, Edwin G. "Science and Ethics." *Science* 86: 595-603; December 31, 1937.

## "THE GENERAL WELFARE"

### *The General Welfare Is Promoted by Human Sympathies*

Ideally, each able-bodied person should provide through his own efforts for the comfort and welfare of himself and of those dependent upon him. If this desirable condition does not exist, a democratic society does not hesitate to take appropriate forms of governmental action. Such public activity does not, however, exempt the individual from the duty of responding to his own natural and kindly impulses. Personal charity and helpfulness need not be sidetracked or stifled by the increasing activity of organized relief.

The conduct of those who live in the democratic spirit is guided by a broad and expanding humanitarianism. Distress, frustration, unhappiness are of concern to persons other than the sufferer. The members of a democracy share its responsibilities no less than its advantages. Callous indifference to the desires and needs of others and short-sighted concentration on personal welfare are discouraged. Each individual, working alone or cooperatively in private or public efforts, seeks to prevent, cure, or ameliorate the sufferings of others, and thus to advance the general welfare. More than that, the democratic way of life seeks not merely freedom from suffering but also a positively wholesome, constructive, and abundant life for all.

### *The General Welfare Places Individuals above Institutions*

Social institutions are convenient systems of relationships among individuals, the lengthened shadows of groups of individual men and women. The state, for example, consists of its members. Destroy all the members and the state is gone; but destroy the state and the members remain. Apart from these individuals the social organization has a merely fictional existence. There can be no such thing as the welfare of "the state" at the expense of, or in contrast with, the general wel-

fare of the individuals who compose it. Man is not made for institutions. Institutions are made by and for mankind.

The institutions of a democracy are not, therefore, set up as golden calves to worship or as Molochs demanding human sacrifice. They sanctify no symbols greater than man himself. They are subject to adjustments at any time according to the wisdom, tolerance, and enlightenment of the individuals who function in them. It is, of course, true that social institutions are not only inescapable but are positively essential for individual well-being. Nevertheless, particular institutions of society can be, and often are, fundamentally changed in form, function, and authority.

### *The General Welfare is Decreased by the Lag of Social Institutions*

A savage tribe may exorcise a plague by sacrifices, dances, incantations. By some coincidence the epidemic abates. The ceremonies which were observed immediately acquire a special sanctity. Their value may be entirely fictitious; better measures may be ready at hand. Yet the mighty medicine becomes firmly established among the tribal customs. The ceremonies are repeated on the same date every year. Those who question the necessity or value of the ceremony are regarded with suspicion or hatred. If the skeptic is a member of the tribe he is condemned for flouting the exemplary traditions of his forefathers. If an outsider, he is suspected of spreading "subversive" doctrine or of being the secret tool of an alien tribe.

This resistance which social institutions offer to change is well known. Man in setting up his social organizations runs the constant danger of creating, like Frankenstein, a monster which threatens his own welfare and happiness. There are several reasons why the momentum of social institutions is so difficult to check or turn from its well-worn course. Change brings a perplexing and uncomfortable rearrangement of the mental furniture, a painful adjustment of established habits of

acting and thinking. And then, change is always uncertain. One can never be absolutely sure how a social institution will work under a new set of conditions. The proverb about the fire and the frying pan distills the experience of the race in this dilemma.

Moreover, success in solving grave social problems is gained with difficulty and people are reluctant to surrender ways whose effectiveness has been demonstrated, to their satisfaction at least, in favor of other ways which, though defensible by every evidence of science and every principle of logic, are new and untried. The willingness of people to suffer accustomed evils rather than risk untried remedies was remarked by the authors of the Declaration of Independence: "Mankind," said they, "are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

A further difficulty in modifying social institutions arises from the attitude of the persons in control. Minorities who depend for livelihood or prestige upon keeping an institution unchanged, and those who derive indirect benefits from controlling it, often prevent fundamental changes in the institution itself. Occasionally such vested interest leads to deliberate untruthfulness and other forms of dishonesty in efforts to maintain the institution unchanged, regardless of the general welfare. But this selfish minority interest is seldom recognized as such by the general public or even by the group which exercises it. More often the minority in control, by wishful thinking, convinces itself as well as others of the "great social necessity" of some archaic social institution or agency. An important function of education, as an agent of the general welfare, is to encourage a continuing and critical appraisal of the suitability of all existing social institutions to the needs of people in the current social scene. The schools neglect a proper duty if they fail to promote the general welfare by reducing the lag between social institutions and human needs.

## *Social Customs Are Conservative Elements*

It is no doubt futile to hope for instantaneous adjustment of social institutions to every transient desire of restless humanity. Even if it were possible to make such adaptations, it would be unnecessary and harmful in many cases. There is virtue in a certain degree of stability. Social institutions cannot be built for the moment, like a child's pile of blocks, without plan and without mortar. Public convenience and necessity require institutions which can be depended upon in an emergency. But the strongest building "gives" a little in an earthquake or tornado, while the building which is completely rigid is easily toppled in ruins. Social institutions minister to general welfare most fully when they have an appropriate degree of stability because of the very fact that they are built to provide a little flexibility in periods of stress and strain.

### "CIVIL LIBERTY"

#### *Democracy Endows the Individual with Important Rights and Duties*

The "essential, necessary, and inalienable rights" of mankind include free speech, unhampered access to the facts on important questions, the voting franchise, religious liberty, impartial justice, the equal protection of the laws, and the great triad named in the Declaration of Independence—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We seldom pause to count these blessings. The right of a man to speak his mind, to worship according to his conscience and his training, or not to worship at all, to enjoy the freedom of the press, to have access to sources of information, to appeal in criminal cases to a judgment by his peers, to be governed by laws rather than by the caprice of men, to be respected even though in a minority—recognition of all these was attained at a great cost which we today have nearly forgotten.

Not only should each of us in a democracy have these rights, but each of us must be willing to accord them to all the rest,



sometimes under extremely difficult conditions. For example, we must not deny the right of free speech to another person even though we profoundly disagree with him. It is easy and natural to seek impartial justice for one's friends. It is not so easy to grant the same rights to one's enemies. Nor are these the most arduous of our tasks. For we must not only grant freedom of speech and press to friends and opponents alike but we must restrain any third party from denying these rights *to either side* in the controversy.

*These Rights Presuppose a High  
Regard for Humanity*

The basis of all human rights appears to be a respect for personality, a belief in the worth, a reverence for the essential sanctity, of all that is human. The members of a successful democracy are, therefore, eager to recognize, develop, and protect the unique and valuable traits of each individual child and adult. They believe that every individual, if given the chance, can make at least some contribution to the common welfare and to his own happiness. They approve Horace Mann's thesis concerning "the accelerating improvability of the human race" and applaud Emerson's dictum that "all men are capable of living by reason."

This doctrine of the worth and dignity of every man received a perennially challenging expression in the ethics of the founder of Christianity. In economic terms it has been described as the supremacy of human rights over property rights. In American literature the dignity and the unique value of each personality have been celebrated by the poetry of Whitman and the prose of Thoreau. The doctrine is revealed as a moving force in American life through many social trends, perhaps by none more clearly than by the gradual extension of the voting franchise.

Thus, the democratic ideal sharply differs from any and all theories which regard the individual as a mere instrument for serving the state, the church, the school, or any other social

institution and organization. The individual must occupy a place of primacy, superior to every institution he himself has ever devised, the point of reference from which values are taken, the final criterion of worth. Democracy and education alike find their warrant in respect for the individual. Democracy strengthens the individual by requiring much of him. "Even the least of these" is given every chance to realize his own inherent capacities; democratic institutions derive their just powers through service to the individual. Through the achievements of individuals the democratic process maintains the solidarity of the group and lifts it to higher planes of civilization.

### *Social Objectives Are Not Neglected*

Social progress and individual freedom interact; each is essential to the other. Yet this vital fact is slowly understood. The real nature of social institutions is all too easily disguised. Only in brief, brilliant flashes of insight has the individual gained control over his social agencies and known them for what they are—nothing more than *systems of related human activities*. The terms "university," "church," or "state" refer to activities which individuals in certain relationships perform. They achieve a second-hand reality only through the individuals who use them to achieve some human purpose.

Yet throughout almost the whole course of history there have been those who, to further their own ambitions, would set institutions over man, their creator, reducing him to a mere social atom, meaningless outside of some institutional frame of reference. History conspires with ambition to obscure the worth of the individual. Myriads of people have labored to create vast empires, to conquer continents, to raise skyscrapers and pyramids, to establish well-defined social and legal codes. Man's works overshadow himself, and the individual contribution to those stupendous achievements seems of little worth. It is difficult but necessary to realize that for him alone those majestic works in the physical realm were raised; for him alone, those

greater cathedrals of the mental world, systems of government, economics, education, religion, and family life were lifted.

Emphasis on the liberties of the individual need not detract from the values placed upon group life; neither does it lessen the need for social objectives. A delicate balance between individual and social purposes is necessary. Society can act upon no wiser policy than to allow each of its members the freedom essential to his own capacities; this to be contingent only upon his recognition of the rights of others to the same privileges. No other factor in all history has so impeded progress as have deliberate and unnecessary restraints imposed by powerful institutions upon the freedom of the individual. Only by the attainment of full mental and spiritual maturity by each of its members can a democracy create the conditions of its own success.

### *Men Are Also Endowed with Important Differences*

Modern investigations concerning the nature and extent of individual differences in intelligence, artistic ability, dexterity, strength, vital capacity, and scores of other traits indicate how wide is the range of human abilities and how complex is the pattern of each human personality. These studies suggest the way in which the democratic doctrine of human values is to be put into effect.

When Thomas Jefferson included among the "self-evident" truths listed in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal" he meant to imply that they are equal in the ethical and legal sense. He certainly knew that all men are not equally tall or equally intelligent. The American people have rightly turned to their public-school system as one of the great agencies for bringing about the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence. Today there runs, through the procedures of the classroom, through the arrangements for educational guidance, through textbooks and courses of study, through the theory of school administration, and even through the formulae of school finance, the objective of an evermore

equitable distribution of educational opportunity, an increasingly emphatic denial of multiple-track educational systems based on economic and social distinctions.

This ideal does not, however, require *identity of educational programs* but rather *equality of educational opportunity*. The two are not necessarily the same. Attempts to provide identical programs are, in fact, doomed to failure by the very existence of individual differences. Democracy does not require that every child comprehend some abstract theory which delights the mind of certain gifted pupils. That would be identity of program but not equality of opportunity. Democratic school systems, seeking the latter, will provide for every child an opportunity which that particular child can really accept, an opportunity not inferior *in its own kind* to that given to others. Democracy does not make one man "as good as another"; it merely seeks to remove all artificial barriers and to assist every man to amount to as much as his ability, character, and industry permit.

### "THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED"

#### *Popular Government Is a Long-Sought Ideal*

We have been saying, in effect, that democracy is not merely a form of political structure; it is a method of living. But government does play an important part in encouraging and exemplifying democratic processes. Democratic government, as such, was dimly but hopefully foreshadowed on this continent in the Mayflower Compact and announced in its most inspiring form by the Declaration of Independence, especially in that reference to the right of the people to change their government so as to make it "most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness." The practical operation of this policy was greatly facilitated by the writers of the United States Constitution when they devised many skillful governmental techniques, including especially the plan of combining federal powers with substantial amounts of state and local self-government. Still more recent developments include the steady extension of the

voting franchise and the establishment of universal education to make that franchise both intelligent and wholesome.

The separation of the state from all authoritarian controls other than the popular will has been achieved in theory. Whatever may be the shortcomings in practice, our theory recognizes no arbitrary controls over government, no vested economic, ecclesiastic, or other interest authorized to over-reach the popular will. From the ultimate popular verdict there is no mundane appeal.

### *Popular Government without Universal Education Is a Prologue to Tragedy*

It is easy to see the direct educational implications of representative and democratic forms of government. We need not go very far back in history to find examples of the fact that mere plebiscite is not necessarily the hall-mark of democracy. The ballot is a travesty unless it is cast by a citizen who is not only free to vote as he pleases but also informed and intelligent with respect to the issues involved.

The men who created the framework of American statecraft were keenly aware of the vital relation of education to the new social order which they were forging in the fires of revolution and controversy. Having committed themselves to representative government, to a government dedicated to definite social responsibilities, they turned to education as a guarantee that the nation so conceived and so dedicated might endure. They recognized, too, that mere political education was not enough. They sought the deepest and surest possible foundation in the arts, industries, institutions, and amenities of civilization itself. They recognized that good government and economic welfare alike rest upon widely shared ideals, wisdom, and knowledge.

### *Knowledge Is Extended, Particularized, and Diffused*

The serious difficulties confronting democratic ways of living are frequently cited. The full audit, however, must not fail to note the assets. Modern democracies have certain advantages

over those of the past and those advantages happily provide the particular kind of strengthening which democracy requires.

First, there is *abundance* of knowledge. Science and the specialization of scholarship will never again permit one man, single-minded, to amass and classify all knowledge as Aristotle tried to do. Intelligence is potential power; knowledge alone can transform it into dynamic energy.

A second advantage lies in the *specificity* of knowledge. Democracies today have direct, pertinent knowledge to bring to bear on a particular problem, even on those pertaining to social living, though this last has been long in coming. We no longer study the stars to gain insight into the character of an individual or to determine the probable course of events. We no longer resort to the auguries as a means of determining foreign policy. Nor need we consult soothsayers for lack of a better source of advice. Man has at last discovered that the way to get the facts about a particular object or event is to study the thing itself.

A third advantage is the *universality* of knowledge. Through universal education the people receive the greatest of all benefits from a powerful institution without in return being forced to pay with their freedom. Knowledge multiplies manifold the chief defense of democracy.

### "THE APPEAL TO REASON"

#### *Democracy Repudiates Violence*

We try to settle our differences by counting noses rather than by cracking crowns. We try to resolve conflicts by the process of compromise, conference, debate, search for pertinent facts, plebiscite, and cooperation, as contrasted with the use of force. When controversies come, as come they must, we provide for balloting to ascertain majority views, accepting the decision with the door always open for appraisal and review. The entire process is carried on under the refereeship of even-handed justice and with due regard to minority rights. The innumerable associations, conferences, and committees which

mark the transactions of American life are another evidence of our reliance upon peaceful and rational methods.

It is not to be supposed that coercion is unknown in a democracy. There will long continue to be required that minimum of coercive restraint which prevents one individual or small group of individuals from harming others or invading their liberties.

It is clearly a function of education to encourage the use of democratic processes as substitutes for coercion. The possible contribution of education to the development of tolerance, reason, and fair play has been clearly demonstrated. That the ordinary school does too little in developing these attitudes may be admitted. The omission represents one of the great areas in which the objectives of education need to be reformulated and reemphasized.

### *The Spirit of Education Outweighs the Forms of Schooling*

The spirit and organization of the school are prepotent. There can be no lasting contribution to peace, reason, and order from a school in which the discipline is based on autocracy; from a school in which the mainspring of effort is rivalry; from a school in which the chief purpose is personal advancement; from a school where the very atmosphere is heavy with intolerance, fear, and suspicion; from a school that ignores and overwhelms the living individual personality of each child.

Only from a school which is served by a socially informed and socially effective teaching personnel; from a school with a broad, humane, and flexible curriculum; from a school saturated with the educational philosophy which commands respect for the personality of each child that it touches; only from methods of instruction which not only teach but which actually *are* democracy and cooperation, will the appeal to reason be heard and heeded.

## "THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS"

### *Opportunity To Secure Happiness Is a Democratic Ideal*

The purposes that impelled the establishment of this democracy were different from those that had dominated other governments. This new nation, established in the wilderness, was a cooperative endeavor to secure an unfettered opportunity for the pursuit of happiness. Other rights, such as life and liberty, were included but, significantly enough, the series culminated in the right to pursue happiness. The term "happiness" as used here, and undoubtedly as conceived by the authors of the Declaration of Independence, does not refer merely, or even primarily, to that effervescent and transitory joy that comes from the exuberance of living, or to the careless excitement frequently generated by the artificialities of life. Happiness is that abiding contentment that comes from a complete and abundant life, even though such a life includes, as all lives must, both success and failure, prosperity and adversity, sunshine and shadow, cradle songs and funeral hymns. To be happy, we must know the realities of life, whatever they may be. We must be able to understand relative values in the midst of confusion, to seek the deeper meanings beyond the shallow, to desire worthwhile achievement in the midst of much that is trivial.

### *Initiative Is Necessary in the Pursuit of Happiness*

The mere guarantee of the right to pursue happiness would be but an empty gesture unless some means were provided to give effect to this promise. The establishment of schools did not settle the problem. First occurred the struggle to make them free. Then came the battle, which has not been fully won to this day, to make the schools minister effectively to the varying needs of all the people. From the beginning the greatest challenge has been to select and make effective those methods



and procedures best adapted to make real for each individual his right to pursue happiness. Several aspects of this problem require further analysis.

In the first place, what will be accomplished by giving a person the right to pursue happiness without the development within him of that initiative, which will lead him to make an effort to realize his right? Initiative is the priceless quality that causes one to undertake voluntarily a search for solutions to problems that confront him. How futile it would be for an individual to be a citizen in a democracy and lack initiative! The value to the individual of the right to pursue happiness lies in his willingness to claim that right.

Initiative can be developed in the same way in which other learning takes place; that is, by confronting the learner with as many kinds of situations as possible that call for the exercise of initiative under the guidance of an expert teacher. It is the same pattern that is followed in teaching a person to read a foreign language, or to walk, or to swim, or to do problems in mathematics. Day in and day out, year in and year out, the growing child is surrounded by an environment that presents real problems for solution. The problems raised by that part of the environment which comprises the school should be closely related to life as it is lived at each age-level and as it will be lived in the future. The learner is asked to help select the objectives of his study in order that the learning may mean more to him and be more directly related to his interests. Those problems are so chosen that he will want to solve them, will be challenged to put forth his best effort to do so, and will understand the practical implications of the solutions when found. Of course, the problems are simple and concrete in the early years of life and expand in complexity as the activities of the learner become more complicated and abstract.

The educational method of the past was expressed largely in sentences of the declarative and imperative type. We told and we commanded. Today, the interrogative and exclamatory sentences have been added to the process. We question and we

stimulate. The learner is confronted by a situation that requires a solution; under some circumstances he may be told the answer, but usually he is required to find it for himself. He is asked questions such as: "What do you suggest?" "What will you do about it?" "What do you think is the way out?" "Where and how do you think the problem should be attacked?" He begins to think, to act, to study, or, in other words, to use his initiative to start out on his search for happiness.

### *Happiness Involves Wisdom in Making Judgments*

A second question confronts the schools in this process of educating the individual to attain success in his pursuit of happiness. What is to be gained by giving the right to pursue happiness, by developing the desire and the tendency to begin the search, if we fail so to educate the citizen that he can and will make the proper choices as, time and time again, he comes to an issue? As he grows older he discovers that life becomes more and more complex. He finds his way through the maze only by choosing as carefully as he can between an endless variety and succession of alternatives.

Can critical judgment be developed through the process of education, and, if so, how is it done in the schools? We are dealing again with an acquired ability which comes as the result of innumerable opportunities to make choices and to arrive at conclusions, under the guidance of an expert teacher. In other words, critical judgment is developed just as is the ability to play chess, or to read a book, or to solve problems in geometry; that is, by long and continuous practice under the criticism of someone qualified to evaluate the decisions. The child must learn the value of evidence. He must acquire a reverence for facts, must desire to find them, and must learn where they can most likely be secured. There are certain sources of facts, certain repositories of knowledge, that have been authenticated through the years. The student must learn what they are and

acquire the technique of using them, and develop the habit of turning to them when called upon to solve problems. He must learn to defer judgment, to consider motives, to appraise evidence, to classify it, to array it on one side or the other of his question, and to use it in drawing conclusions. This is not the result of a special course of study or of a particular part of the educative procedure; it results from every phase of learning and characterizes every step of thinking.

### *Education Is the Key to an Abundant Life*

Finally, the schools must, in the preparation of the individual, search for the types of experiences that will make probable the realization of happiness. Somehow, the learner must come to know what constitutes real happiness, must learn where it is most likely to be found, must desire to acquire it for himself and others, and must master the way of claiming it. For what is the use of establishing a democracy guaranteeing the right to pursue happiness, and of developing through processes of education the initiative to search for it and the ability to choose the right path, if we leave the person unable to recognize happiness when he finds it, or to interpret its deeper meanings if he recognizes it?

The ability to claim and live the abundant life is not innate. It is acquired through long and patient study. Therefore, the modern school gives a large place to those subjects and those types of experiences that mankind has found to satisfy the deeper longings of the soul, and to inspire the noblest achievement. Many phases of the curriculum help the individual to supply his needs in relation to his physical existence; other phases include the skill subjects which enable one to use his environment and deal with his fellow-beings; still another phase has to do with the various forms of expression of human thought and feeling that constitute the culture of mankind. This last includes our religion, art, literature, architecture, music, poetry, drama, and all other forms through which noble

thoughts and feelings have been added to the social inheritance and handed down through the centuries as man's tribute to his Creator and his gift to posterity.

It is the function of the schools to help every person to find and use the key that will unlock the riches that are the common possession of all. Unlike some other inheritances this one can be claimed only by those who will prepare themselves to be worthy of it. Merely dotting our land with buildings that point their spires heavenward, or hanging the masterpieces of our art on our walls, or making countless books available through a thousand libraries, or bringing the drama of the ages into every city, village, and hamlet, or making great music available to everyone, does not mean that all will be able to claim the heritage that these and a myriad other sources of happiness provide. Only those who have acquired the methods of interpreting, who have learned the meanings of the various languages through which the heritage is transmitted, who have attuned their eyes and ears, their thoughts and emotions, to catch the messages that are all about us like the unsensed and uncaught radio waves which, in the dead of night, flood the world—only those are educated to succeed in the great task of happiness.

### III.

#### THE OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION: A GENERAL REVIEW

*The Purposes of Education Have Received the Attention  
of Leaders in Thought and Action*

WHAT is education to accomplish? What changes in human conduct should the schools seek to bring to pass? Is growth or achievement the fundamental aim of education? Should the schools render first loyalty to the promotion of individual welfare or to the general social improvement? Should schools seek primarily to adjust students to the conditions of life as it is or to impel them to improve these conditions? Should organized education emphasize ideals and attitudes or facts and skills? Should the public schools try to prepare young people for specific jobs? What knowledge is of the most worth?

These questions have been found worthy of sustained and devoted attention by such great philosophers as Plato and Spencer, such religious leaders as Luther and Loyola, such men of letters as Milton and Montaigne, such statesmen as Marcus Aurelius and Thomas Jefferson, such scientists as Agassiz and Huxley, and such educators as Comenius, Pestalozzi, and Parker. These great thinkers, and many more besides, have left us a store of trenchant wisdom and inspiration regarding the purposes which education and the schools should promote.

*Popular Opinions on the Purposes of  
the Schools Are Held*

Interest in the objectives of educational institutions has not been confined to a few exceptional leaders. Plain citizens, parents, taxpayers, and even the young learners themselves have in mind, although more or less confused and dimly perceived, some notion as to the reasons why they support and participate in the means of education.

An examination of these popular concepts of educational purposes would reveal much that is trivial, much that is inspiring. We ask a child, "Why do you go to school?" He replies without hesitation, "To get a good report card." What answer could be more conclusive—or more profoundly disturbing?

Ask a youth in high school the same question. The answer: "To prepare for college; to be on the team; to be a better citizen." And the college student may reply: "To get ahead in the world; to get a better job; to earn more money; to keep up with my crowd; to learn to make the most of my life."

Many parents, especially those whose own schooling is limited, have a touching faith that the possession of knowledge (particularly the knowledge recorded in books) will somehow make their children happier, better, more successful. What parent does not share with Enoch Arden

... the noble wish  
To save all earnings to the uttermost  
And give his child a better bringing-up  
Than his had been.

From all of these sources—from the writings of leaders in thought and action, the deliberations of professional groups, the quick, naive responses of youth, and the dimly-felt, ill-expressed longings of the ordinary citizen—there emerges an array of stated educational objectives, similar in some respects, but differing in viewpoint, in form, in arrangement, in degree of detailed analysis, and in the methods thought suitable for attaining the desired goals.

### *A Democratic Way of Life Is the Inclusive Purpose of American Education*

The general end of education in America at the present time is the fullest possible development of the individual within the framework of our present industrialized democratic society. The attainment of this end is to be observed in individual behavior or conduct. The term "education" implies the existence of some person other than the learner, a person moreover who

is interested in the outcome and who desires to encourage one type of conduct rather than another.

Ideals and values derive their entire practical importance from the behavior which results from them. The expression of high ideals accompanied by the doing of wrong is thoroughly vicious. Education, therefore, seeks to encourage the mastery of such knowledge, the acquisition of such attitudes, and the development of such habits as make a socially desirable way of living likely to be followed by the learner.

The choice of this way of living, as we have already seen, is primarily determined by the prevailing scale of social and personal values; that is, by ethical standards in the broad. The definition of this scale of values is a continuing and crucial problem of both social and educational policy.

We have seen also that the way of living to be encouraged by the education of the American people is a steadily closer approximation to the democratic ideal. In the immediately preceding chapters, the value of this ideal has been defended and its essentials have been described.

### *The Aspects of Democratic Living May Be Classified in Diverse Ways*

We are ready now to set down in some detail a description of the necessary and desirable elements of information, skill, habit, interest, and attitude which will most surely promote individual development and encourage democratic ways of living among the people of this country.

This is a large order which can be carried conveniently only if it is wrapped up in several smaller packages. There is a real difficulty at this point. All behavior is interrelated. Even the facile distinction between the conduct which concerns an individual alone and the gregarious conduct which the individual shows in his relation with others, eventually breaks down. What a man does about his own health, for instance, may be a matter of concern to his family, to his business associates, to

the entire community in which he lives, perhaps even to the people of the entire world.

It is necessary, nevertheless, for convenience and clarity in writing and thinking about the purposes of education to consider separately the various dimensions of total behavior. One can identify and name various mountain peaks even though all of them are part of one unbroken mountain range and even though the exact spot where one mountain ends and another begins may not be located.

There is no ultimate virtue in any single classification of objectives. The particular analysis followed in this volume lends itself well to the type of discussion desired. It permits a reasonable degree of specificity in pronouncement while avoiding the enmeshment of detail.

### *Education Is Concerned with the Development of the Learner*

The first role, or phase of total behavior, is that of the educated person. Conduct in this field is centered on the personal development, growth, and learning of the individual. It includes his use of the fundamental tools of learning, his health, his recreation, his personal philosophy. The placing of these objectives first in the list is not accidental. They deal with the development of the individual himself. In a democracy this field is of supreme importance. Success in this role conditions one's success in every other phase of life's activities. The purposes of education which fall under this section of total behavior will be referred to as *the objectives of self-realization*.

### *Education Is Concerned with Home, Family, and Community Life*

A second area is that of home and family relationships with their immediate and natural extensions to neighbors and community. Educationally the home is the most powerful, as it is perhaps the oldest, of all social institutions. Good homes and good communities are the basic units of democracy. The activ-



ities of the educated individual which relate to these immediate, person-to-person contacts are, therefore, grouped together in a section on *the objectives of human relationship*.

### *Education Is Concerned with Economic Demands*

The next aspect of the activities of the member of a democratic society includes the economic sphere—the creation and satisfaction of material wants. Here we consider the education of the individual as a producer, a consumer, an investor. The importance of such education in providing the indispensable material basis for comfort, safety, and even life itself is clear. The objectives within this general area will be classified under the heading of *the objectives of economic efficiency*.

### *Education Is Concerned with Civic and Social Duties*

Finally, there are the activities of the educated citizen. They involve his dealings with his government—local, state, and national—his relationships with the peoples of other nations, and his other “long-distance” contacts in large-scale collective enterprises. This field of activity is served by education through *the objectives of civic responsibility*.

### *Four Groups of Objectives Are Identified*

To recapitulate, four aspects of educational purpose have been identified. These aspects center around the person himself, his relationships to others in home and community, the creation and use of material wealth, and socio-civic activities. The first area calls for a description of the educated *person*; the second, for a description of the educated *member of the family and community group*; the third, of the educated *producer or consumer*; the fourth, of the educated *citizen*. The four great groups of objectives thus defined are:

1. The Objectives of Self-Realization
2. The Objectives of Human Relationship
3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency
4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility.

Each of these is related to each of the others. Each is capable of further subdivision.

Before we begin to discuss separately each of these groups of educational purposes, several comments regarding the classification as a whole may be made. It is not intended that we should think of the purposes of education as a field which is now neatly divided into four equal quarter-sections, each of which is in turn to be further surveyed and staked out into claims. The classification will be more helpful if we think of it as a series of four vantage points from which the purposes of education may be studied, the total result being a comprehensive view of the whole. In making our reconnaissance, each field of view will be seen to shade imperceptibly into the others and into the field as a whole.

Furthermore, the school is only one of the many educational influences in these various fields of human life. Its responsibility extends to all of these areas, but in some areas the weight of education rests on the schools more exclusively than in others. The role of the school is especially definite in preparing for *civic responsibility*. The school, therefore, must condition, and concern itself with, every phase of civic education. It must concern itself with loyalty to society as a whole rather than to the political manifestations of society as revealed in any single institution. Vested control of this function by the political state leads to dictatorship. The field of *human relationship* is shared by the school, the home, and the rest of the environment. Education in the field of *self-realization* or personal development is coming to be more and more a duty of the schools although much of this responsibility necessarily inheres in the home and the church. Under modern economic and industrial conditions preparation for *economic efficiency* is largely a function of the school.

Finally, it should be clear that the following four chapters are not in any sense to be regarded as a pattern of instruction at any particular educational level. There will necessarily be variation in the application of the objectives to instructional

need within particular schools, communities, states, and regions. These are the objectives of education—qualities and conduct to be encouraged by all educational agencies for all American citizens.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF SELF-REALIZATION

*The Inquiring Mind.* The educated person has an appetite for learning.

*Speech.* The educated person can speak the mother tongue clearly.

*Reading.* The educated person reads the mother tongue efficiently.

*Writing.* The educated person writes the mother tongue effectively.

*Number.* The educated person solves his problems of counting and calculating.

*Sight and Hearing.* The educated person is skilled in listening and observing.

*Health Knowledge.* The educated person understands the basic facts concerning health and disease.

*Health Habits.* The educated person protects his own health and that of his dependents.

*Public Health.* The educated person works to improve the health of the community.

*Recreation.* The educated person is participant and spectator in many sports and other pastimes.

*Intellectual Interests.* The educated person has mental resources for the use of leisure.

*Esthetic Interests.* The educated person appreciates beauty.

*Character.* The educated person gives responsible direction to his own life.

## IV.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF SELF-REALIZATION

IT is appropriate to begin a survey of educational purposes with a program for the development of the individual learner. There exists at the moment great pressure on schools and other social agencies to "mold" the child in the interest of his *future* economic efficiency, his *future* adult citizenship, his *future* membership in the family. There is real danger that our preoccupation with "preparedness" in education may defeat itself by weakening our concern for the child as he is, as a growing individual human being, quite apart from remote social preparatory ends.

Here is no unsocial motive, for after all, as we have already seen, it is only through individual growth that social progress can come. The ancient and artificial antithesis between the individual and society and the concept of a perpetual struggle between the two is not supported by this analysis. The realization of "self," as considered here, occurs through interaction between that "self" and society. It cannot occur unless the individual effects a satisfactory relationship to the society in which he moves. If an individual is to become his own best self, he must constantly be in contact with the best that is in humanity. Thence, he will draw his highest aspirations, thence his greatest achievements.

The processes of growth, or self-realization, therefore, are a primary concern of education, a concern which includes, but also reaches far beyond, the memorization of the useful and useless facts which usually make up the bulk of the school curriculum. Only as each individual grows in power to write his own declaration of intellectual independence can we keep unfettered the spirit of that other Declaration written a century and a half ago.

## *The Educated Person Has an Appetite for Learning*

The educated person in the years of his immaturity has been started upon a career of lifelong learning. With an active and wide-faring curiosity, even an untutored man may become an educated person. Without it, the holder of the most decorative diploma from the highest school in the land remains essentially uneducated.

The curiosity of the educated person ranges widely over many topics and probes deeply into a few. Because of the enormous and growing stock of human knowledge, every one must be content with a limited education in many fields. A little knowledge is a wholesome thing; only its misuse is dangerous.

The educated person finds a sense of intellectual adventure in learning all he can about the world in which he lives and about the people, the animals, and the plants which share his existence on this planet. In addition to this general learning the educated person, through continuing study, experience, experiment, and reflection, has made some corner, however small in the vast field of knowledge securely his own by right of personal conquest. Let it be noted in passing that this learning does not by any means depend solely upon books. Its sources are as varied as the life of man. Such an education is not gained in a few years in school; it is a lifetime enterprise for which formal schooling should supply a good running start. No great exaggeration is contained in the observation in the *Education of Henry Adams*—"They know enough who know how to learn."

## *The Educated Person Can Speak the Mother Tongue Clearly*

A mastery of the various arts of using one's own language is the most universal of all educational objectives. It was a primary concern of the schools of ancient, as it is of those of modern, times. It is perhaps an open question which of the four language arts—speaking, listening, writing, and reading—is most important. The ceaseless grind of the printing presses and the existence of basic literacy among almost all of the adult population combine to magnify the importance of the reading

aspects of language. Yet the spoken word remains, for the great majority of American citizens, the principal channel of receiving and giving information and of exchanging ideas and feelings. Modern inventions seem to be emphasizing listening and speaking activities at the expense of reading as a method of education. The telephone, spreading its network throughout the country, makes possible remote conversation for social as well as business transactions. The talking motion picture, watched by an average weekly audience of 115 million persons, is another invention which now emphasizes the spoken word. Finally, there is that one-way conversation, the radio, which pours through 30 million loud-speakers enormous amounts of information and propaganda, as well as material designed for amusement and recreation. In sum, it has been estimated that speech is the basis of 90 percent of all our communication, leaving only 10 percent for writing and reading.

Since speech in its most rudimentary form is acquired in the home and elsewhere, it seems to require less highly detailed techniques of teaching than does the acquisition of the art of reading. This fact, however, scarcely excuses the school from assuming some share in the responsibility for improving the ability of the people to express themselves. Certainly the disparities between actual and desired achievement are more readily detected in oral speech than in reading or in any other school subject.

Observers familiar with social life in foreign countries often comment disparagingly on the aridity of American efforts at conversation. Even people who are otherwise well educated frequently lack the ability to converse coherently and interestingly about any topic, even (or perhaps especially) about the topic with which they are most fully acquainted. True, successful conversation is no simple art. "It is much more than a matter of composing, more than mere communication of one's ideas; it obviously includes choosing which ideas to communicate, and which, for the time at least, to suppress. It may involve finding a topic in which the vis-à-vis is interested. It

involves tone of language, tone of voice, manner, all suited to occasion and personalities. And in addition it involves the ability to anticipate the effect produced."<sup>1</sup> There seems to be no good reason why this ability, so useful for disseminating information and increasing the value and satisfaction of social contacts, should not be more generally included as a definite aim of instruction in American schools.

To conversation, which is private speaking, we should add ability in public speaking. The tongue-tied confusion, or worse, the unorganized loquacity which afflicts many of us when "called upon" is neither necessary nor wholesome. The degeneracy of public speaking is by nothing more clearly shown than by the common reference to a speaker as a "spell-binder." If more of our people possessed the ability to speak their minds and their hearts clearly and simply, they might assume a more critical attitude toward the demagogues who often aspire to public office. A nation of Daniel Webster's or Patrick Henry's would, no doubt, be altogether too voluble and resounding for comfort. But for the general run of students the schools may well sacrifice the studied arts of the orator if they will provide instead instruction in the ability to state what one knows or believes in a simple, brief, and direct fashion.

### *The Educated Person Reads the Mother Tongue Efficiently*

In addition to the eager search for knowledge which the educated person always exhibits, he needs to have available every possible means of satisfying his urge to know the truth. One of the important tools in this quest is an ability to read. When we teach this skill to a child, we hand him a passport to cross boundaries of time and space, a letter of introduction to the great minds in all parts of the world and in all periods of time. To this ability should be added, wherever possible, the ability to read in other languages, although the availability of transla-

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<sup>1</sup> Hatfield, Walter W., chairman. *An Experience Curriculum in English*. A Report of the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1935. 323 p.



tions of practically all important writings makes the possession of a second reading language a matter of less than primary importance and one which need be undertaken only by those students who have at their disposal a relatively long period of formal education.

There are three kinds of illiterates. First, there are those persons, now happily few in number, who do not know how to read. Programs for the reduction of illiteracy among the adult population, combined with almost universal elementary schooling, are making this a problem of rapidly declining importance. There is, however, a second type—the functional illiterate who possesses some degree of skill in reading but who never reads anything. And there is yet a third type who possesses the skill to read and who does read but who never reads anything significant. The last two types of illiteracy are even more dangerous than the first. To teach the mechanics of reading without giving guidance in the selection of reading material and without developing reading habits is, to put it mildly, wasteful on a colossal scale. The schools must be concerned with eradicating all three types of illiteracy.

We must never be content, therefore, to declare our objective gained when a child has first learned to stumble through words and sentences. Nine thousand different books are issued in the United States alone every year. This is at the rate of a new book every sixty minutes. Magazines, pamphlets, and newspapers represent an even greater mass production. The schools must, as part of the program in reading, show the child how to *select* his reading, to read some things carefully, to skim other books hastily, to reject still others entirely, to comprehend what he reads and to apply it in the solution of his problems, to use reading as a means of experience, and to enjoy to the fullest degree possible the rich domain of his heritage of world literature. Nothing less than this is a justifiable goal in teaching reading. The amount, distribution, and quality of reading done by a population is likely to be an excellent index of cultural development and social competence.

### *The Educated Person Writes the Mother Tongue Effectively*

Since every citizen of a democracy should be able and willing to contribute from his experience and his beliefs to the solution of the common problems of all, it is clear that every citizen should be able to write a simple and straightforward statement in clear, cogent, and legible English. Writing activities fall into such functional categories as letter-writing, formulating announcements, reporting an experience, writing directions or explanations, and keeping personal memoranda. These expressional activities are basic to the teaching and learning of written composition. They should contrast with the formal theme, the academic forms of discourse, and literary rhetoric.

In addition to the functional program in written English there should be provided opportunity for creative expression, the artistic translation of personal experience into words. This type of writing may develop the pupil's capacity to value experience for its own sake rather than for any utilitarian end, and increase his pleasure in the experience through the effort to translate it into words. The obligation of the writer to present his ideas legibly is universally recognized. For those students who are likely to spend time in formal education at the college level or elsewhere, the ability to write shorthand and to write on the typewriter is a desirable aid to further learning and, often, to finding a job. Writing as practiced by the newspaper reporter, the journalist, and the professional author is a vocational subject, the treatment of which belongs elsewhere. For these persons, however, as well as for those whose writing will not be directly associated with earning a living, the characteristics of the writing desired consist especially of simplicity, clarity, honesty, legibility, and brevity.

### *The Educated Person Solves His Problems of Counting and Calculating*

Some acquaintance with numbers and skill in the fundamental operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division is an educational objective to be taken for granted.

The skills to be taught in this field and the types of problems to which these skills are applied should be determined by the kinds of arithmetical calculations which the ordinary American citizen has occasion to make. Elaborate and helpful investigations have been made to bring these fundamental operations into a position of prominence, and recent revision of the curriculum in many school systems has resulted in great improvement in arithmetic instruction. In addition to skill in mathematics there needs to be developed an appreciation of the cultural value of mathematics, and of its usefulness as a mode of thinking and as a means of interpreting world affairs.\*

Closely associated with the fundamental arithmetical operations are the elements of intuitional geometry and applied algebra. Intensive technical study of more advanced mathematics should be offered to those whose vocational outlook, future education, or other special interests will make it necessary or helpful for them to use such knowledge.

New aspects of applied mathematics are constantly developing and the educational experiences of children and adults need to be extended to include them. For example, the presentation of numbers in graphic and tabular form is becoming extremely common. Children should learn the rudiments of graphic presentation, particularly since this form of presenting data is at once so effective and so easy to misinterpret. The presentation of numerical data in graphic form is becoming a language with its own grammar and syntax. It is, however, a language which can ensnare and deceive the unwary. If children are to be taught that in the number 376, the 3 is in the hundred's column, the 7 in the ten's, and the 6 in the unit's, why should they not learn also the proper form for a chart and know that a chart which lacks certain features is potentially or actually dishonest and unreliable?

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\* Williams, K. P., chairman. *The Place of Mathematics in Secondary Education*. Preliminary Report of the Joint Commission of the Mathematical Association of America, Inc. and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1938. 70 p.

The ability to deal with number and form, the fundamentals of mathematics, has always been a basic human need. In an age such as ours where almost every phase of life is strongly marked by applied science and technology, the appreciation and use of basic mathematical skills and concepts offer significant assistance for self-realization.

### *The Educated Person Is Skilled in Listening and Observing*

With a fine disregard of orthography, the fundamental skills of learning have been traditionally referred to as the three R's—reading, writing, and arithmetic. The scope of these basic skills needs extension. The true fundamentals of learning include much more than those three which have been enumerated. Most of our knowledge is gained, and most of our thinking engendered, by other methods, particularly by speaking and other means of self-expression, by listening, by observing, and finally by reflecting on what we have read, written, counted, calculated, said and done, heard and seen. Hazlitt's remark that "it is better to be able neither to read nor write than to be able to do nothing else," is in point here.

The traditional three R's, it is true, require for their mastery, a certain intensive application which is probably unnecessary for the other cultural fundamentals. But this does not mean that some training in the other fundamentals is unnecessary. It requires less skill, no doubt, to watch with some comprehension a moving-picture version of *Treasure Island* than it does to read the book of the same title. Both may be wholesome activities for an educated person. If so, is it not a part of the fundamental cultural equipment to be able to extract from a play, a motion picture, a radio program, or even from the observed events of everyday life their utmost in the possibilities of life enrichment? There are, in short, more than three "tool subjects," and schools should be concerned with securing the greatest possible proficiency in the use of all of them. If the rudiments of some skills are acquired outside of the school,

the school's task remains, nevertheless, that of perfecting the effective use of these more common tools and of promoting safeguards against their exploitation to the disadvantage of the individual.

*The Educated Person Understands the Basic Facts  
Concerning Health and Disease*

Health is a factor which conditions our success in all undertakings, personal and social. For that reason schools properly place great emphasis on health as an outcome of education. For the educated person the first requirement in the field of health is an inoculation against superstition, voodoo, witchcraft, and humbug in the fields of medicine and human biology. The best serum now available for this purpose is scientific knowledge concerning the human mind and body as a functioning organism. Thus protected, the educated person looks with skepticism on the claims of makers of patent medicines for the ills of the body and the appeals of the large tribe of pseudopsychologists who claim to minister to the mind diseased.

The national health survey completed in 1938 by the Public Health Service showed that six million people in the United States are incapacitated by illness or accidents on a typical winter day. In one year there occur twenty-two million illnesses disabling for a week or longer. The average person is disabled approximately ten days out of every year. People ignorantly waste many millions of dollars on needless illness and on useless or harmful patent medicines, spiritualistic seances, mind healers, and a sorry train of similar nostrums and quacks. The schools would save more than their own total cost if they could see to it that the oncoming generation of adults used its resources for health more wisely.

*The Educated Person Protects His Own Health  
and That of His Dependents*

Knowing what is necessary for maintaining health in body and mind, the educated person so conducts his life as to re-

spect these great rules of the game. For himself and his family he tries to secure competent medical advice and treatment with special attention to the early discovery and treatment of remedial defects and a systematic plan of health inventory and illness prevention.

Knowledge of the structure of the human body is incomplete and of little value without knowledge of how the various parts operate. The instructional emphasis here should be positive, dealing with the healthful functioning of the human organism, rather than with the breakdown of this function in disease. The approach should be rational and scientific; should include all the basic biological functions, such as nutrition, respiration, and reproduction; should be adapted to the maturity and interests of the learner; and should eventuate in firmly established habits of healthful living. The scope of health education should clearly include the promotion of mental as well as of physical health.

A democracy, with its respect for individual life and happiness, is dedicated to the proposition that all children should be wellborn, carefully guarded against avoidable infections, properly nourished in body and mind, and given an environment in which they can grow into healthful maturity and have a chance to live long, happily, and well.

Safety from mental and physical disease suggests safety from accidents. A collision with a ten-ton truck may be as deadly as a collision with a streptococcus. The steadily declining accidental death rate among children is apparently attributable to safety instruction. These efforts should be continued and expanded, with particular emphasis on carrying over safety habits into adult life.

### *The Educated Person Works To Improve the Health of the Community*

The interests of the educated person in the field of health are comprehensive. That which he desires for himself in this field, the educated person desires also for others, knowing

that health is one commodity which is increased in proportion as it is shared. Especially in a democracy, the educated person will cherish a sincere interest in maintaining the health standards of the entire community. His humanitarian sympathies can here be strongly supported by self-interest since the transmissible nature of many diseases assures security for the individual only when the entire community is protected, and safety for the community only when the health of each individual is maintained. The educated person, therefore, insists on community, state, and national health services which not only enforce sanitary ordinances and guard against the more obvious epidemic diseases, but which definitely promote the health of the entire population. He shows an active concern in all conditions which threaten the safety or injure the health of others, promotes the health work of schools and other social agencies, and encourages study and corrective action concerning the economic, physical, and social conditions which cause disease and imperil health of mind and body.

*The Educated Person Is Participant and Spectator  
in Many Sports and Other Pastime*

Under the stress of modern life recreation has become a first cousin to health. The educated person does not make the mistake of confusing health with strength. He understands how to utilize both his working time and his leisure time to the maximum personal and social advantage. His hours of relaxation from the strain of productive effort are carefully guarded and wisely used.

The American people stand in urgent need of learning how to relax. Material success has too long been made our supreme objective in schools and elsewhere. Psychiatrists and other physicians are testifying to the mental and bodily damage caused by the ineptitude of the average American for the fine art of having a good time out of one's own resources. Many have attained success only to find they have lost happiness in the process. An extravagant worship of the unremit-

ting drive of business activity prevails in many quarters. Even our everyday language betrays this confusion of values; we even speak of the "business" of living, whereas the principal and important part of living is an art and not a business. The precepts taught by the school in this field need to be supported in many cases by changes in what the schools are actually doing.

Recreational skills may be divided into two general types: those which emphasize direct participation, and those which emphasize the role of the spectator. Both are important.

The participant in recreational activities requires a certain mental and physical equipment which can be improved through education. The development of the physical skills, strength, and agility necessary for participation in a variety of wholesome games and sports is an important aspect of education. The athletic and physical education programs of secondary schools and colleges are moving slowly and tardily toward a democratic basis which serves the entire group of students rather than being largely concentrated on a few favored individuals who "make the team." This trend is wholesome; it should be accelerated and broadened.

Competitive sports are a powerful and, within limits, a desirable motivating force in encouraging wholesome bodily activity, but such competition may do more harm than good if it centers on a few persons to the neglect of the majority, if it elevates winning the game over playing the game, or if the game is too rigorous, exhausting, or otherwise dangerous. Recreational training, therefore, should include in its purview the less competitive physical activities such as walking, camping, swimming, skating, and various forms of manual and creative arts.

The fact that recreative activity is as essential for adults as it is for children and youths, and the desirability of promoting common family interests, suggests the importance of giving training in sports and other activities which are suitable for both adults and youths. Games and creative activities which



children and youths enjoy and which also carry over into the interests of adults have a strong claim for attention.

Recreation also includes the role of spectator in the theater, at the opera, or at the stadium. Only a small proportion of such activity has learning for its purpose, though involuntary learning, wholesome or the contrary, may well occur. Some fear has been expressed lately about the evils of "spectatoritis" on the ground that the American public is becoming altogether too concerned over passively watching others play and not sufficiently interested in taking an active part. Whatever the present trend may be, there is little to be gained by debating the relative merits of observing and participating in various recreational activities. Most of us are not likely, under present conditions at least, to get too much of either. We should not quarrel about participation versus observation but should seek to encourage both. The right balance of these two types of activity varies with the individual, but for the average person each actively supports and enriches the other.

There is some tendency to regard the role of spectator at certain recreational activities as being inferior to others. Many people feel that a visit to the theater to watch professional actors perform is somehow more wholesome and worthy than a visit to the baseball park to watch professional athletes perform. There is probably little justification for such an attitude. It is true that some ugly and debasing aspects are associated with professional sport but the professional theater is not always noted for its freedom from such influences. It is at least open to question whether there is anything intrinsically more dramatic and elevating in watching the struggle on a darkening stage between Macbeth and his conscience than in watching under a warm summer sun a good nine-inning pitching duel. In any case, we may well teach boys and girls how to watch and appreciate a well-played football or baseball game. Similarly, we may learn to enjoy taking part in amateur theatricals and through such activities reap a richer harvest in watching the performance of professional actors.

### *The Educated Person Has Mental Resources for the Use of Leisure*

Properly defined, the term "recreation" has an even wider meaning than that already developed. Despite a common misuse of terms, "recreation" is not synonymous with "exercise." The former is not, nor should it be, limited to vigorous large-muscle activities. Is there any good reason why a curriculum which can include football and baseball might not also include checkers and even bridge?

Reading, of course, is one of the major forms of recreation. Skill in the use of printed material for acquiring information has already been mentioned. Reading for fun likewise is no unworthy occupation, nor is it one that can be followed without some preliminary training. Children should come to know books as a means of acquaintanceship with other boys and girls, as a way of learning about animals and birds and plants and stones, of finding out how people live in the country and in the city, and of enjoying fairy tales, nonsense rhymes, and stories of wonderland. From these beginnings emerge the continuing life interests in recreational reading pursued during adult life to escape temporarily from reality, to relive common everyday experiences, to satisfy curiosity about human nature and human motives, to enjoy pleasurable emotional experiences, to learn of immediate current happenings or of those far away from one's own environment, and to pursue a hobby.

Fiction, travel, biography, history, or even scientific and technical materials may serve these ends depending upon the interest and purpose of the reader. Even catalogues, shoppers' leaflets, and railroad timetables may sometimes represent recreational reading.

For many persons the playing of musical instruments, alone or in orchestras, is a satisfying recreation. Almost everyone can sing and enjoys doing so; with some training for the singer, others may enjoy it too. The rudiments of the international language of music are for most people easier to acquire than the art of reading words. We are told that in Elizabethan

England, for example, every educated person had musical competence. Should any child today leave our schools who has not added to the art of reading words the simple and pleasure-giving art of reading music?

Painting, sketching, photography, and other forms of representative art can also be placed within the reach of many by means of a little preliminary assistance, encouragement, and instruction. The wide and ingenious range of hobbies must also be included among the constructive recreation possibilities. Under present conditions, leisure-time interests which require a minimum of expense and equipment are particularly desirable.

None of these matters is unworthy of serious attention by schools which are earnestly concerned with the democratic ideal of helping each individual to grow in self-realization. These are extracurriculum in name only; indeed it is to be doubted whether any elements of the "regular" curriculum are more truly educative than the activities associated with recreation. A shallow respect for false and harmful "standards" has in the past kept the recreative arts in the place of the poor relation. It is time to place them in a position of honor at the educational table.

### *The Educated Person Appreciates Beauty*

Beauty is one of the great desires of the human heart. Even very young children eagerly and unmistakably respond to beauty in color, rhythm, harmony, and form. A bright toy is treasured above a dingy one. A cube, a ball, or a wheel seems to contain in its very contour elements of form which bring forth the approval and delight of children. It is one of the important functions of education to help the growing child to seek, to enjoy, and to treasure beauty throughout his entire life. The delicate colorings of fine paintings, the balanced masses of sculpture, the strength and lightness of noble architecture, the rhythm, harmony, and melody of poetry and music—all these should surround the growing child. He should hear beautiful music and participate in making it. He should

make with his own hands the designs of representative art in order to increase his understanding and appreciation of the artistic work of others. These are not easy things to teach and the first requirement for doing so is the teacher's own understanding and appreciation of the esthetic elements of life. It is more difficult and much more important to teach a child appreciation of the beauty of poetry than it is to require him to memorize a poem or to identify the grammatical elements which enter into its construction. It is easier to teach the rules which permit one to classify plants than it is to teach an appreciation of the color and form of flowers.

The importance of the school environment in this connection can hardly be overemphasized. The people of the United States will not reach their full stature in esthetic development while their children spend formative years in school buildings with unkempt grounds, ugly architecture, and bare or garish walls. The home life of many children is lived in mean and sordid conditions. This fact increases the responsibility of the schools to see that the stars are not completely shut out above their heads, to keep alive in them the love for the song of a bird, and to stimulate the ambitious reach of the soul for the things which enrich it.

### *The Educated Person Gives Responsible Direction to His Own Life*

Our democracy, with its necessary and wholesome separation of Church and State, gives to every man and woman complete freedom of religious belief and opinion. We all have a right, a constitutionally guaranteed right as well as a moral one, to choose that form of religious expression or outlook which we find most completely satisfying. The public schools are required, by law and by every element of their tradition, scrupulously to respect this American doctrine of religious liberty. The inculcation of any particular religious creed is therefore entirely foreign to the proper function of public education, although other educational agencies, particularly

the home and the church, may well be actively concerned with such tuition. Yet there remain the great problems of human destiny which will always perplex, inspire, and ennoble the human spirit—problems of the relation of man to that which is beyond man, of the plan, if plan there be, which directs or conditions human existence on this planet, of the meaning in human birth, life, aspiration, suffering, and death. That man is not well educated who ignores these problems. Nor is he educated who maintains an attitude of cynical indifference or of intolerant bigotry toward the efforts of others to satisfy their spiritual needs. He is educated only when he understands and appreciates the spiritual and ethical principles which constitute a central part of the heritage of the race.

Many Americans find a satisfying answer to religious questions in the teachings of one or another of the organized churches. Others find a solution which satisfies them outside of the framework of organized creeds. Education for self-realization in a democracy permits these perplexities to be squarely faced and confers on each of us the priceless privilege of developing his religious philosophy in his own way and in an atmosphere of tolerance and freedom. The educated man uses this privilege to attain a personally satisfying religious philosophy.

Out of the sheer necessity for some interpretation of himself and his world, each person develops his own philosophy of life. This functioning philosophy may be regarded as a framework through which one views the circumstances of everyday life, an organizing accumulation of ideas, feelings, and attitudes which comprise a basis for the individual's criticism and evaluation of what comes within his experience. A philosophy of life is not the exclusive possession of scholars and priests. It is an everyday necessity. Although he may be unaware of its existence, or if aware may see no semblance of its design, each man, nevertheless, is finding always a certain pattern by which he interprets and conducts his life. He has his own way of meeting the disappointments that are his lot.

He possesses some set of values, some code of ethics, some sense of the esthetic. And he has a certain faith upon which he relies when his knowledge has carried him to its ultimate limits. The result of this philosophy in his everyday life reveals his true religion no matter to what formal creed, if to any, he may subscribe.

The development of a philosophy of life is highly important from the standpoint of society as well as from that of the individual. A man may consecrate himself to the finest ideals of a great religion, to a loyalty to truth, to devotion to human brotherhood, to reverence and aspiration toward his God. On the other hand, he may interpret vital matters in terms of the grossest supernaturalism; his interpretation of religion may lead him to persecute those who strive to find truth by means which he neither approves nor comprehends; his code of ethical values may lead him to applaud the most vicious depravity and the most selfish exploitation. Although such a philosophy may be satisfactory to its possessor, it is definitely unsatisfactory to others.

It is of especial concern in an evolving democracy that educational experience shall develop a strong sense of responsibility for the direction of one's own affairs. Economic maladjustments have often conspired with human frailty to encourage a degree of indolence and a willingness to saddle upon others the burdens which are properly one's own. Whether such dereliction of duty takes the form of allowing one member of the family to carry an unfair share of the household work, or of idle and luxurious living without attempting to produce goods or services of social value, or of failing to vote at important elections, or of allowing one's front yard to become a neighborhood eyesore, or of accepting relief or charity when able to find suitable employment, this lack of self-responsibility is a serious threat to democratic ways of living.

Such attitudes are to a large degree a product of faulty environment and faulty education. A democracy must be concerned not only with giving everyone an opportunity to

hew out his own destiny but must also seek to develop in each individual strong qualities of initiative, accountability, and self-direction.

The development of a philosophy of life, or a religion, is based on the learning process. Like other learning, it is not fully consummated until it makes a difference in the practical conduct of one's life. No imposition of the thinking of another, however well fortified with threats and promises, can give the individual a ready-made philosophy, or a set of superior values. Any other mode than following the processes of education through their natural course of questioning, testing, and forming judgments, is poorly suited to self-realization through democratic processes.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

*Respect for Humanity.* The educated person puts human relationships first.

*Friendships.* The educated person enjoys a rich, sincere, and varied social life.

*Cooperation.* The educated person can work and play with others.

*Courtesy.* The educated person observes the amenities of social behavior.

*Appreciation of the Home.* The educated person appreciates the family as a social institution.

*Conservation of the Home.* The educated person conserves family ideals.

*Homemaking.* The educated person is skilled in homemaking.

*Democracy in the Home.* The educated person maintains democratic family relationships.



## V.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

THE previous chapter emphasized some important purposes of education with respect to the development of the individual. The present chapter is devoted to the objectives of education as related to the more intimate connections of the individual with his friends, his immediate neighbors, and the members of his own family group. On the whole, there is perhaps no field of human activity requiring the services of education which has been so meagerly dealt with by the schools. Between the individual's inner life and his far-flung contacts with 130 million fellow citizens, there is an important intermediate area of day-to-day, face-to-face relationships which could be profitably studied by those directing educational programs.

#### THE FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR

##### *The Educated Person Puts Human Relationships First*

The impact of education on a developing personality should lead that person to place human welfare at the very summit of his scale of values. He should judge old traditions and new inventions by the same high and single standard. Whatever has an evil effect on human beings and their relations to each other is to be disapproved, regardless of the comfort, luxury, or economic gain it may bring. Too often, modern standards ignore the intangible effects of scientific and social inventions on human relationships. We tend to approve anything if only it adds in some small particular to our ease and comfort. The schools have a definite responsibility for developing a sense of values which exalts men above money or machinery.

The history of inventions shows the disrupting effects of their uncontrolled use for economic gain without due regard

to concomitant influences on human relations. New machinery for the weaving of cloth, for example, while it made possible a more ample supply of textiles, at one time deprived thousands of men and women of their means of livelihood, and degraded the level of living for other thousands. Many workers died of want before even crude social and economic adjustments to the new and more efficient methods of cloth production were made. The industrial revolution has taken its toll of lives as ruthlessly and cruelly as any political revolution has ever done. Its influence still shadows our path and much of the hardship and strife which have accompanied the struggles between owner and workman could have been prevented by a proper concern for the human elements in the situation.

The application of machinery to transportation provides another example of unfortunate influences arising from the use of inventions without regard to human values. The automobile, for example, is highly attractive because of its speed and comfort. Yet, when we see the automobile in its total social effect, we remember that it has helped criminals to escape the reach of the law, that it takes an enormous toll of injuries and deaths every day, and that it has tended to disrupt community and family life. The school can inculcate an attitude and habit of considering inventions and social innovations with first regard to the human aspects of them. The desirable material advantages of inventions should be conceded, but the "march of progress" is a travesty unless the superior importance of human values be made the center of attention.

In short, the educated person learns through practice to consider the well-being of others. The school is particularly competent to help in this process. It is detached from commercial and promotional interests to a degree which makes it more able than any other institution to appraise conflicting interests in significant terms. Children in school will probably never again be in a social situation more favorable for this purpose.

*The Educated Person Enjoys a Rich, Sincere,  
and Varied Social Life*

When life was simpler than it is now, the satisfaction of the need for genuine friendships required little attention on the part of organized social agencies. Today, the concentration of millions of people in large cities, as well as other social changes, have made the achievement of a genuinely social life difficult for many. Social groups are large and complex and especially so for that growing part of the population in the metropolitan centers. These nuclei of population give rise to many special problems relating to crime, delinquency, divorce, and other aspects of broken family life. Many children in urban schools have gone there from the country. From a relatively simple social environment they are thrust into one which is highly complex. The same circumstances hold for a large part of the adult population. Whenever such new adjustments have to be made, education has a part to play in facilitating these changes.

The newcomer to the city misses the spontaneous meetings of neighbors which he formerly knew. The shallow pretenses of "society" may be substituted for friendly sociability. He finds that almost every phase of his social life is highly organized and specialized. He must *join* something in order to participate. Among the dozens of groups and organizations which compete for his attention, there is none, with the possible exception of the school, where he is regarded just as an individual. Organizations are interested in what he may contribute or in some one particular phase of his behavior—his religious activities, his recreational interests, his business or professional career, his political affiliations, and so on. His nostalgic longing for the old folks at home, the neighbors " 'way out yonder," is vividly portrayed on many a stage and screen and provides a recurrent motif in modern music and literature. Each of the various separate aspects of his social life may be nurtured by the efficient and highly organized social life in the city, but

the genuineness represented only by the relationships of whole personalities to each other is often lacking. Juvenile delinquency and crime often reveal the failure of young people to adjust to this piecemeal type of social organization. Disintegration in human relationships finally results in disintegration of personality.

The school can closely parallel the simple, honest, and sincere forms of community life. It enjoys unique possibilities for providing in the life of the child an integrating influence. The school can help him to interpret and unify his detached and seemingly unrelated experiences. The child may learn several codes of ethics—one at church on Sunday, one taught by the boss with respect to selling newspapers, and one accepted by his friends at play. In such a situation the school can never obtain its real objectives if it is content to regard itself as merely one more organization to concentrate on one special angle, the intellectual angle, of the personality. Schools should minister to all phases of the developing personality.

The methods used in encouraging learning are extremely important as far as developing desirable human relationships is concerned. The work of the classroom is too often arranged so as to destroy, rather than to create, friendship. This is especially true when an undesirable amount of competition among pupils is stressed. The bright pupil grows jealous of his laurels. Every other member of his class looms as a competitor rather than as an ally. Meanwhile, the less favored pupil may develop a bitter and natural resentment, not only against the school which continually places the mark of failure upon him, but against his more fortunate classmates who consistently surpass his efforts. The school which permits and encourages such antagonisms needs to reevaluate its purposes and methods in the light of human relationships. The book-worm who has exchanged friendships for erudition has made a poor bargain at best.

## *The Educated Person Can Work and Play with Others*

Democracy is a highly cooperative undertaking. It can become more effective if children learn to cooperate in school. The traditional methods of teaching, however, stress competition rather than cooperation. Marks of distinction and honors of all kinds have been showered on the pupil who surpasses his fellows. Ideally, our schools should give prizes not to the one who wins more credit for himself, but to the one who cooperates most effectively with others. We pin the badge of failure on the child who is defeated in a competition rather than on the child who has not learned to cooperate. This not only makes the social life of the competing children unhappy and unfruitful while they are young, but it destroys those impulses towards friendly cooperative effort which might have made their lives as adults happier and more wholesome.

As a practical matter, the substitution of cooperation for competition as the chief motivating force of education must be accomplished gradually. In many schools, where the children have known no other guide to learning but competition, other motivations will have to be introduced slowly and tactfully. Democratic cooperation in the classroom, and outside of it, is only possible when the group works toward some common goal. Each individual shares the opportunities of leading and of following; each carries a part of the responsibility; each shares in the total product. Children should learn through experience, as directly as possible and at an early stage of their lives, that the combined efforts of a cooperative group can often solve problems that the ablest individual in the group cannot meet unaided. The possibilities of cooperation through government, cooperative marketing and purchasing, voluntary associations, credit unions, and similar devices should be explored by children at appropriate times in their educational experience.

A reconciliation must here be effected between two desirable and to some extent conflicting outcomes. It is important that

young people gain confidence in their own individual powers. This calls for a measure of success in competition with others. A certain degree of self-reliance is highly important. It is not likely to come except through demonstrated individual achievement. At the same time the development of the self should not be allowed to run to excess. Democracy must have its leaders but they should be leaders who work in the spirit of cooperation. In the schools of democracy successful cooperation should be a part of the experience of all.

*The Educated Person Observes the Amenities  
of Social Behavior*

The Chinese, it is said, open a conversation with a new acquaintance by inquiring, "And what is your honorable age?" In America we usually say, "What line are you in?" Every society develops its code of polite behavior, the lubricating elements in its machinery of human relationships. A genius may be able to get along in defiance of these amenities. Most people find them inescapable necessities, sometimes annoying, but usually extremely useful.

Knowledge and practice with respect to one's conduct at a social gathering, the approved method of introducing one person to another and of acknowledging an introduction, the use of "please" and "thank you," table manners which are not offensive to others, and other similar social courtesies ought to be learned by every child.

It is true that many of these customs are of little intrinsic significance; true, also, that most of them are rooted in the customs of antiquity and have little current logical justification. Nevertheless, they simplify and facilitate social intercourse and thus fulfill an important function. The educated person has learned these rules of conduct, with some understanding of their origin and role in social contacts. He realizes that the origin of all politeness is courtesy, and that the root of all good manners is consideration for others. So taught, these cus-

toms will make easier and more profitable the development of desirable human relationships.

### HOME AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Among all social institutions the family holds first place as a creator and guardian of human values. What the child shall become depends first of all on the kind of family responsible for his upbringing. The home is literally the nursery of humanity, the matrix of personality during the most impressionable years, and a continuing influence throughout life. To what degree a person is fearful or confident, malicious or kindly, ruthless or reasonable, bigoted and autocratic or tolerant and democratic is perhaps determined more completely by relationships in early family life than by any other set of experiences. Not only are these experiences first in time and prepotent in effect during childhood, but family relationships continuously influence the manner in which persons conduct their affairs in other groups.

One important responsibility of education, therefore, is to improve and develop home and family life. Effective discharge of this responsibility requires work with younger children, with adolescents, and with adults. Children at various points in their school careers may be helped to understand the family as a social institution, to acquire homemaking skills, and to work out happy and socially constructive adjustments with members of their immediate families. Young people may be helped to master and appreciate the specific knowledges and insights needed in marriage, homemaking, and parenthood. Married couples and parents on the job may be given opportunity to study their problems and work out ways of handling their obligations.

#### *The Educated Person Appreciates the Family as a Social Institution*

The family, that is the system of relationships among parents and offspring, is important everywhere, but the structure of

the family group and family activities and customs differ from culture to culture and from age to age. The size and composition of families, marriage customs, the obligations of members one to another, and the responsibilities of families as units to other social groups all seem to vary under the influence of climate, topography, natural resources and the methods of utilizing them, the dominant forms of social, economic, and political organization, and the prevailing ethical standards.

However varied, the institution of the family performs two fundamental and interrelated sets of services. For the individual the family provides care and protection while capacities are maturing, guidance in learning to get along with others, security, and affection. Biological parenthood is only the first step. Without protection and nurture, infants could not survive. Without the give and take of family life they could hardly become social beings. Without the affectionate intimacies of the family circle, personality is not likely to develop normally. Every individual is thus the product of family life in a social as well as a biological sense.

For society as a whole the family performs its second group of essential functions. It regulates sex relationships, making it possible for men and women to express the sexual phases of their nature in a socially constructive manner. It produces future citizens and nurtures them into adulthood, sharing this responsibility with the schools and other agencies during middle and later childhood.

If a person understands how fundamental is the role of the family in human society, he will see social significance in every home and every family, and he will be more likely to value his own home and family life. Education should help to develop this appreciation.

### *The Educated Person Conserves Family Ideals*

Because of the headlong progress of invention and science, the forms of family organization are changing. Chores and



common production enterprises were formerly training grounds of character. As labor-saving devices eliminate or reduce the chores and as consumption becomes the primary family activity, conflicts tend to arise, not so frequently over who will do what work, but over what share of the family income each will have for his own use, and what use each will make, and when, of such family goods as the radio and the car.

In the modern world women frequently find full-time employment outside their homes. One-fourth of the wage earners of the country are women, and of these gainfully employed women, more than one-third also maintain homes. It has been estimated that 40 percent of the wealth of the country is now held by women. Each year, therefore, economic security becomes a less important motive for marriage. These tendencies, together with more liberal divorce laws and a decline in the authority of the church, are accompanied by higher divorce rates. This trend, in turn, is complicating the lives of many adults and increasing the hazards of wholesome personality development for many children.

Again, the concentration of manufacture and commerce has resulted in the crowding of ever larger proportions of the total population into urban centers. The demand for living quarters sends land prices skyrocketing and leads to the construction of smaller rooms and apartments. Crowding and cheap construction bring fire and disease hazards. Unplanned use of land for building deprives children of outdoor play. The prevalence of such conditions, despite counteracting movements, adversely affects the lives of many families.

Most changes in family life stem back to changes in economic and social organization. However much we may bemoan the passing of older patterns and ideals, or fear the coming of new, we cannot hold back this tide of economic and social change that is breaking today into every corner of society. We can, however, with the help of education, try to understand it, use it, and control it for the attainment of our

democratic purposes and the preservation of cherished human values.

At such points, then, education has a task. If it can help people understand the social origin of ideals, how they are transmitted in family life, how they have changed in the past and are changing now, it can help them make the adjustments required. So far as education does help people make these adjustments, it will be making one of the most significant contributions both to individual happiness and to cultural development.

### *The Educated Person Is Skilled in Homemaking*

Every member of the family plays a role in the drama of home and family life. Each role is different and, for all but the younger members of a family during their more dependent years, constantly fluctuating. Different kinds of food must be prepared with each year of infancy and early childhood. Changes in age and fashion dictate what clothing shall be purchased and how it shall be repaired. Similarly, the managing of income, the operation of heating units, the upkeep and repair of fixtures and appliances, the protection and maintenance of health, the special care of children in sickness and convalescence, the selection of play equipment in guidance in its use, and many other housekeeping and homemaking activities change with the ages of children and of parents, with shifts in income, with changes in taste and values, and with many other variables.

Most persons go a long way in teaching themselves these homemaking skills, with or without the help of interested relatives. In addition, girls for three decades past, and more recently boys, have sought help from schools in mastering the homemaking skills. The teaching of cooking, budgeting, accounting, management of time, routine care of children, and consumer purchasing is rising toward a high level of effectiveness.

Further development of this phase of education should give special consideration to new labor-saving and efficiency devices, new distributing, and servicing facilities, and new consumption habits. It should be remembered also that skills serve in fact as instruments of personality. The teaching of homemaking skills is an important phase of family life education, but as in all education the development of skills should be correlated with the development of an understanding of the dynamics of family relationship and of the family as a changing social institution and with the cultivation of appreciations and insights.

Every homemaker and parent possesses valuable resources in his own wit and in the wisdom developed by experience. But other resources are also available. Books contain rich stores of knowledge about housekeeping, health, nutrition, child care and development, and other phases of family life. Few persons live beyond the reach of libraries or traveling library services from which books on these matters may be secured. In all but a few of the more remote areas there are also available the professional services of doctors, public health workers, home demonstration agents, homemaking teachers, social workers, and recreation leaders. As time permits, the educated person explores books for knowledge and his neighborhood for facilities and professional services which may be used for the welfare of his family. He tests each and makes use of promising discoveries.

### *The Educated Person Maintains Democratic Family Relationships*

The educated person understands that families will differ one from another, in order the better to meet the needs of their members, and that family living requires constant adjustments on the part of each member. Only when each young person discovers a scale of values which he believes socially desirable will he be able to let himself go in making these adjustments creatively.

Education for family living will deal chiefly with problems of everyday human relationship—problems of children in their parental homes; problems of young people as they struggle to separate themselves from parents and to enter into comradeships within their own age groups; problems arising in the cycle of falling-in-love, engagement, marriage, and the establishment of one's own home; problems of parents in trying to understand growing children and in cheerfully according an increasing measure of independence to children as they attain maturity. Such education will seek to make clear the important human values to be protected in all these different areas of life.

While the resulting scales of values will be different for each individual, belief in democratic ideals would result in certain common behavior. The educated person puts himself in the place of other members of the family, both older and younger. He understands their experiences, enjoys with them their satisfactions, and undergoes with them their fears and sorrows. As older persons succeed in doing this, their assistance to those who are younger becomes a spontaneous response to emotional need and so is more likely to be accepted and used constructively.

When democratic ideals and processes are applied in family life, plans for enterprises in which the family as a whole engage are made cooperatively. This includes immediate activities, such as choosing what movie the family will attend tonight, as well as long-time planning, such as the making of yearly budgets. Every person expresses preferences and contributes opinions according to his experience and ability. No member of the family who is mature enough to have an opinion on the matter in question is disregarded.

In the democratic family the carrying out of family plans is also cooperative. Every member of the family has chores scaled to his ability, time, and interests. Sometimes these are done alone, sometimes with others. At successive stages of growth and family development, each accepts as just a share of the household work commensurate with his age, ability,

and interests and with tasks being carried by other members of the family.

In the democratic family, differences are settled by reason, persuasion, and compromise. This process works successfully to the degree that each participant makes an effort to discover how the other person understands the situation, and how he feels about it. If older members of a family rely upon this method, it is generally accepted by those younger as by the mature. Qualifications are necessary: to expect children to be "reasonable" before they are mature enough to understand the experiences of others is to desire the impossible. Again, when health or safety is in question, the parent's first obligation is protection.

The person who learns how to be democratic in his family relationships will tend to participate in political and economic affairs in a democratic manner. It is no accident that the early home life of many statesmen and other leaders, whose names are associated with democracy, has been characterized by broad humanitarianism, cooperative attacks upon the problems of family living, and the adjustment of differences habitually by methods of reason. To foster democratic family relationships is to build democracy into the economic, social, and political life of the nation.

With increasing social and political complications, the tasks of operating family life and making needed adjustments in its pattern are increasing in difficulty. Education must bend anew to this work, for the stakes are vital. As citizens learn and practice in their families that regard for the common welfare and that use of reason in composing differences which are essential in the democratic way of life, they will be predisposed to democratic behavior in wider relationships, and democracy in the nation will receive fresh impetus at its source.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY

*Work.* The educated producer knows the satisfaction of good workmanship.

*Occupational Information.* The educated producer understands the requirements and opportunities for various jobs.

*Occupational Choice.* The educated producer has selected his occupation.

*Occupational Efficiency.* The educated producer succeeds in his chosen vocation.

*Occupational Adjustment.* The educated producer maintains and improves his efficiency.

*Occupational Appreciation.* The educated producer appreciates the social value of his work.

*Personal Economics.* The educated consumer plans the economics of his own life.

*Consumer Judgment.* The educated consumer develops standards for guiding his expenditures.

*Efficiency in Buying.* The educated consumer is an informed and skillful buyer.

*Consumer Protection.* The educated consumer takes appropriate measures to safeguard his interests.

## VI.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY

THE objectives of economic efficiency relate to those activities which have to do with creating and using goods and services. At present, the major emphasis in education for economic efficiency is placed on the productive or vocational phase. It is often the only aspect of economic education which receives serious attention. This one-sided emphasis is unfortunate. Granting the importance of producer education, the equal and corollary importance of consumer education must not be overlooked. Production and consumption are related to each other as the back of the hand is to the palm. The roles of the consumer and the producer are equally dependent upon education for efficiency.

We begin with the objectives of economic efficiency as they relate to the production of goods and services.

#### THE PRODUCER

##### *The Educated Producer Knows the Satisfaction of Good Workmanship*

In a democracy each person contributes, according to his ability, to the essential welfare of all. This means that under ideal conditions each able-bodied adult follows an occupation for which he or she is fitted by ability, personality, and training and which provides goods and services of social and individual value. It is important that children should learn that each may properly enjoy the fruits of civilization only by doing his part in the work of the world. Work should be regarded as something to be sought, enjoyed, and respected rather than as something to be avoided, suffered, and despised. "Work," as used here, includes the efforts of the teacher, the doctor, the housewife, the businessman, the artist, as well as the usual shirt-sleeve and white-collar occupations. Even

the younger children can learn the necessity of contributing effort to a common cause. Changing social conditions make work around the home for children difficult to arrange. Even at some inconvenience to the adults, however, such work would prove to be of wholesome educational value.

In the schools opportunities for real and socially desirable employment may readily be found. Why should not students learn valuable practical arts, contribute to the social dividend, and save public money by improving and safeguarding their own school building? Such work, of course, should be discontinued when the educational value of student participation reaches the point of diminishing returns.

The barrier to providing work opportunities as part of the educational program is largely traditional. As with many other realistic educational suggestions, this proposal is slowly adopted because of an unwillingness to recognize that there can be educational values occurring outside of classroom study and book-centered recitation. It is declared that the students cannot spend time away from Latin declensions and geometry theorems in order to learn the value of useful work. Under such circumstances, we must always try to determine what activity has the maximum educational value for the particular child concerned.

Nothing in the foregoing statement should be construed as indicating approval of exploitive child labor, curtailment of educational opportunity, or the use of children in occupations in competition with adult employment. Students should not be entrusted, of course, with work of a highly technical nature for which they lack strength or skill.

*The Educated Producer Understands the  
Requirements and Opportunities for  
Various Jobs*

The classic example of occupational learning is Benjamin Franklin's story of how he was led by his father from one shop to another to observe the work of the artisans. Under the



relatively simple economic conditions of that day, occupational information was easily acquired outside of organized schooling. The boy learned about farming from his father and on his occasional visits to the county seat watched the blacksmith, businessmen, and the representatives of the other occupations of the day at their work. Now all that is changed. There are more specialized occupations, less opportunity for learning on the job, and consequently greater need for the assistance of the school.

### *The Educated Producer Has Selected His Occupation*

Most people *drift* into some occupational field with the result that there is much wasteful occupational shifting and many a square peg in a round hole. The more nearly the age of entry to vocation coincides with complete maturity and all the responsibilities that go with it, the more imperative it becomes that the first vocational choice be as nearly right as possible. The future success, happiness, and efficiency of the individual, to say nothing of the direct concern of society in the matter, often depend on making a proper, though not necessarily a permanent, vocational adjustment not later than the attainment of adulthood. The guidance of the school with respect to such vocational adjustment will help the student to survey the needs and opportunities for employment and to appraise his own potentialities and opportunities. It will point out to him the educational programs which best meet his needs and help him to make wisely the choices he will have occasion to exercise during his secondary-school career, during his induction into his vocation, and during his progress in the vocation. A statement of the importance of vocational guidance need not imply that the school personnel is omniscient or gifted with prophecy. Existing methods for appraising individual vocational aptitudes and predicting occupational trends call for further development through research and experimentation.

Without vocational guidance, vocational education may be

extremely wasteful. Such guidance, of course, is to be regarded merely as one important part of a larger and continuing process of education involving adjustment of the individual from childhood to old age in all the areas of human activity. For youths in secondary schools as well as those of the later adolescent years who are not in school, the major problems of guidance are concerned with entrance into occupational life, adjustment to the withdrawal of parental support and parental control, establishment of new family relationships, progress toward economic independence, and the commencement of the duties and privileges of adult citizens.

One of the most striking examples of the need for an expanded and effective program of vocational guidance is the existence of certain tutorial and correspondence schools making extravagant claims for training men and women in a variety of occupations. There are, it is true, many excellent schools of this type which conduct vocational training of a high type and render a real educational service. There is, no doubt, a definite need in American education for the services of a few such schools. But it has been necessary for the Federal Trade Commission on occasion to issue warnings to protect the public and control the more glaring examples of exploitation and quackery in this field. Well-designed programs of vocational guidance and education in the public schools should develop, among other things, the ability of young people to distinguish between the valid and the spurious types of private enterprise in vocational preparation.

### *The Educated Producer Succeeds in His Chosen Vocation*<sup>1</sup>

That preparation for vocational success is a part of the total educational job is not seriously questioned by anyone. The chief points at issue at the present time are the extent to which such vocational preparation should be provided within the organized

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<sup>1</sup> A more recent discussion of the subject may be found in *Education For All American Youth*, Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1944. 421 p.

schools and the educational level at which specialized vocational preparation should begin. One need only consider the vast differences in the intellectual, physical, and other requirements for vocational success in the various occupations to see that no single simple formula can determine the role of the school in each case. In most of the vocations which are usually called "professions," it is generally agreed that the school, college, and university must carry the primary educational responsibility, with some cooperation with the professions concerned through various forms of internship. In the vocational preparation of mechanics of various kinds, differences of procedure are in order. Skilled occupations which are carried on quite uniformly in almost every community, such as carpentry, masonry, and automobile repairing, can be prepared for effectively by school agencies provided the demand for workers and the density of population are such that it is possible to assemble a sufficiently large number of learners to provide instruction at a reasonable cost per student. In other occupations of a more specialized nature, vocational preparation has to be given either in state or regional training schools or in schools operated by the employers of the persons in these specialized occupations.

Although it is impossible to state in detail the specific responsibilities of the schools in equipping children with specialized vocational skills, there are certain general principles which seem to be valid. First, the relationship between vocational education and the employing and the employed groups must be close, sympathetic, and cooperative. Schools ought to cultivate relationships with industry and other occupational fields. The term "practical" education should not be used solely to describe society's *out-of-school* efforts to deal with the occupational preparation.

Second, it is no longer profitable, if indeed it ever were, to debate the relative importance of vocational and nonvocational education. The two are not properly considered as competitive: they are phases of a single process. An educational program which, taken as a whole, neglects either aspect, is in-

complete, if not actually harmful. The difference between vocational and nonvocational studies, then, is one of emphasis in the individual student's purposes. A working distinction cannot be based on any single logical or arbitrary classification of the parts of the curriculum. When a subject or part of a subject is pursued for the primary purpose of developing marketable initial skills or vocational competence, it may be vocational; but the very same activities, undertaken to discover or develop interests and abilities or to enrich living, become essentially nonvocational.

Every subject of instruction and every daily lesson may relate to occupational activities—the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, and social as well as the musical, artistic, homemaking, agricultural, and industrial studies. Moreover, each may contribute a significant share to general education as a whole. Every subject is also, at some stage, a tryout of the interests and abilities of students. An evening course, designed primarily to train workers in certain occupational skills, may be pursued by some students as a recreational activity, in which latter cases it is essentially nonvocational. Again, the prospective teacher of French or of drawing studies French or drawing as part of his occupational preparation, while other students ordinarily aim at enrichment of experience.

The principle should also be made clear that when interests and abilities have been discovered in any field, opportunities should be provided for their continuous development without excluding other possible or desirable interests or activities. The guidance program should aim to plan each pupil's total learning activities in harmony with his interests, abilities, and vocational outlook, and to provide the necessary safeguards against too early specialization on the one hand and dissipation of effort and neglect of abilities on the other hand. This planning, it should never be forgotten, must be done pupil by pupil. It is not an activity suitable for mass action.

### *The Educated Producer Maintains and Improves His Efficiency*

Perhaps the most significant current development in American education is the growing recognition that the responsibility of educational agencies for the welfare of youth no longer ends with graduation or school leaving. The continuous study of the problems of vocational adjustment which confront all youth and, to some degree, all adults, in school and out, must continually modify educational objectives. The schools and other educational agencies should develop attitudes which will lead the worker to attempt to improve his vocational fitness through constant study of the relationship of his work to that of other fields. Technological change indicates the wisdom of widespread opportunity for adult vocational training and retraining. Workers who, because of technological, economic, or accidental reasons, find themselves unemployed or unemployable must be helped to make a new choice of work and to retrain for competency in a new vocation.

### *The Educated Producer Appreciates the Social Value of His Work*

With proper social motives, a vocation may be made the most compelling purpose of education which we can set before a pupil. The fundamental subjects of study, preparation for home life and citizenship, applied science and mathematics, and practical economics—these and many other fields when approached from the viewpoint of the vocation and its related life often take on a richer meaning. On the whole, America has been fortunately free from the Old World concept that no "gentleman" can follow any occupation other than that of scholar, priest, or soldier. A democracy will not separate its work and its culture. It will not regard one who works as inferior nor set false distinctions between occupations. One of the important tasks of education is to extend the worker's insight into the social utility and significance of his work, the scientific back-

ground of what he is doing, his relation to other workers, and what his work means to other people.

The vocational life of many persons now includes an extremely narrow range of intellectual activity. Until more fundamental reforms can be devised and secured, society should take steps through its educational agencies to ameliorate the undesirable features of this trend. Equally desirable with a share in material wealth is a share in the intellectual resources of the world. For this latter field, the schools are particularly responsible. Vocational education in a democracy should stress the contribution of the occupation to the social welfare and temper the all too common use of personal pecuniary advantage as the primary objective of learning.

## THE CONSUMER

### *The Educated Consumer Plans the Economics of His Own Life*

The economic security of many people is highly tenuous. Disability, the cost of medical care, unpredictable losses of savings, incomes insufficient to provide a reasonable living standard, irregular employment, and complete unemployment are factors which interfere with the best laid personal economic plans. Individual action, no matter how prudent or industrious, may be quite inadequate to meet these hazards to personal economic well-being. These larger economic adjustments will need to be made by large-scale social and governmental action. The role of the educated person in such action may best be considered in connection with the chapter on "The Objectives of Civic Responsibility."

Apart from these larger socio-economic adjustments, however, there is no inconsiderable area for individual care and discrimination in planning and operating the economic phases of life. Not all economic insecurity is due to unemployment and illness. Foolish spending which yields no enduring satisfactions or advantages, general gullibility and thriftlessness, gambling

against odds which can be stated only in astronomical terms—these undermine economic security and efficiency at all income levels and among all sorts of people. The educated consumer budgets his expenditures in the light of good principles as adjusted to his own particular circumstances and financial ability. He has learned that small expenditures, constantly repeated, mount to large totals. He knows that all borrowing costs the borrower money, and sometimes exorbitantly so. He knows that instalment buying is a form of borrowing. He can balance a checkbook. He buys no gold bricks. He uses good sense in his savings and understands the relative advantages of banks, insurance, credit unions, the postal savings system, government securities, and the various types of business investments as a means of developing and utilizing his reserves. Through such means, the educated consumer has learned to exercise the highest possible degree of economic self-responsibility.

### *The Educated Consumer Develops Standards For Guiding His Expenditures*

The individual judgments and preferences of the buyer, weighted in our economy by monetary incomes, determine the uses to which natural resources and human energies are put. To the extent that there is ignorance of need and undesirable standards, there will be discrepancy between effective demand and the line of general advantage in terms of health, vigor, beauty, creative activities, and similar values. Productive energy is misdirected on a grand scale by unwise consumer judgments.

The consumer's education should seek to improve his scale of preferences by leading him to evaluate his own standards. Consumers should be acquainted, therefore, with the most important conclusions of science and experience about human needs and the means of meeting them. Those tastes should be cultivated that are the source of esthetic enjoyment and the development of those arts and aptitudes that recreate, enrich experience, and widen the outlook. At this point of special need in our society our educational program is weak. Those whose

knowledge is deficient should be familiarized with the most desirable consumption patterns. This democratization of high-level consumption is a part of the mass education necessary in an equalitarian society. A simplification of living or deviation from the approved pattern based on ignorance is not the same as simplicity or deviation based on deliberate preference. As a basis for the understanding and appraisal of their own standards consumers should be acquainted with the social and esthetic value of other culture groups, past and present. Attention should be given to the psychology of choice; current consumption standards should be analyzed and an attempt made to understand and evaluate the forces that have shaped and are now shaping them. Independence of judgment and discrimination in making consumption choices are especially to be fostered since in this realm blind obedience to custom and slavish deference to the opinion of others are so characteristic.

Education for consumption with the objective outlined above obviously cannot be limited to one sex; nor can it without grave hazards be entrusted to those interested in guiding demand for their own financial advantage. Clearly also this education cannot be attained through the study of a single field of knowledge.

### *The Educated Consumer Is an Informed and Skillful Buyer*

An important role of the consumer in our society, or of an unpaid family member to whom the responsibility is delegated, is that of buyer. We are here concerned not with directing wants but with their economical satisfaction through market selection. Concretely, the consumer attains this end—gets the maximum amount of what he wants for his money—only when he selects the best goods available at a particular price or when he gets an article of specified quality at the lowest price available. Thus, although there is some relationship, education of the consumer for buying is obviously a different matter from education



to form values, to elevate tastes or stimulate new interests and desires.

Education for buying is not so difficult a task or so far-reaching in its scope as the education of the consumer as choice-maker. More fundamental than the economical satisfaction of wants is their shaping and direction. The former is, however, a necessity if great economic wastes are to be avoided. Consumer-buying is now a haphazard process characterized by mistakes and losses that can be corrected only by market changes and by education of the buyer. Here are involved questions of prices and price changes, quality, quantity, adulteration, substitution of one commodity for another, fashion and style, instalment buying, and sales resistance.

An educational program, designed to increase the buyer's efficiency, should begin with knowledge of what goods are available in the market. The buyer must learn what specific qualities to seek and what to avoid in these goods. He must discover, in other words, what makes an article good and what makes it bad *for his purposes*. So far as the qualities or quantity of specific goods are made known by means of a standardized nomenclature, the buyer must know the meaning of such terms. The buyer must know not only the goods he is buying but the market in which he buys. The educational program organized for his benefit should, therefore, give him understanding of marketing agencies and their operation. He should understand the pricing process under various conditions; he should be familiar with selling methods; he should be able to evaluate sales talk, price policies, and market arrangements in general.

Since buying is today so largely in the hands of women, education for buying should especially be emphasized in all educational programs constructed with their special needs in mind. Education for buying may be considered as a major part of the vocational training typically, but not exclusively, needed by women under the current division of labor in the home.

## *The Educated Consumer Takes Appropriate Measures to Safeguard His Interests*

Finally, the intelligent buyer should know his legal remedies in case of injury to health or purse and be familiar with the special protection given by state or federal statutes or local ordinances. He should be able to evaluate the adequacy of his legal protection and know what changes are desirable. He should know which legislative measures proposed would be to his interests and which would be against them. He should join with other consumers in bringing about necessary protective legislation. He should learn the advantages and disadvantages of joining with other consumers for the cooperative purchase of goods, for securing impartial advice on the relative merits of different brands and makes, and for securing legislation which is in the interest of consumers generally.

In all of the aspects of consumer education, sales promotion is today the dominant educative (or miseducative) force. This force, by the very circumstance of its existence, is in the hands of personally interested parties who must seek to create effective and continuing demand for their goods or services. Advertising should, of course, be truthful but, even if misleading or "false" advertising were completely eliminated, the need for consumer education would not be met. Information and skill in choosing and buying are as important as information and skill in producing and selling. Consumer education is a universal need; it should be provided for all through the schools and not left to accidental learning.



## THE OBJECTIVES OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

*Social Justice.* The educated citizen is sensitive to the disparities of human circumstance.

*Social Activity.* The educated citizen acts to correct unsatisfactory conditions.

*Social Understanding.* The educated citizen seeks to understand social structures and social processes.

*Critical Judgment.* The educated citizen has defenses against propaganda.

*Tolerance.* The educated citizen respects honest differences of opinion.

*Conservation.* The educated citizen has a regard for the nation's resources.

*Social Applications of Science.* The educated citizen measures scientific advance by its contribution to the general welfare.

*World Citizenship.* The educated citizen is a cooperating member of the world community.

*Law Observance.* The educated citizen respects the law.

*Economic Literacy.* The educated citizen is economically literate.

*Political Citizenship.* The educated citizen accepts his civic duties.

*Devotion to Democracy.* The educated citizen acts upon an unswerving loyalty to democratic ideals.

## VII.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

#### *The Educated Citizen Is Sensitive to the Disparities of Human Circumstance*

IT is of peculiar importance that all the citizens of a democracy become aware of the extraordinary range of conditions under which men live. Most of us look at society with a lens of exceedingly short focus. What lies at a distance is invisible to us or is recognized only dimly. The area within which the educated individual "has a feel" for the experience of others has been greatly expanded. What is it like to be a farm laborer? a textile factory operative? a rolling mill hand? What is involved in living for years at the bottom? What is it like to live in a slum area? to survive a flood? to come through a dust storm? What does it mean to rise from the bottom? Vivid records of these and a host of other human experiences can be brought to the attention of young people through the schools. Excursions to situations within reach of the schools can be used to good effect. Film material will probably in time serve the same purpose and bring both nearby and remote environments before the eyes of children and youths. Literature, too, affords excellent opportunity for vicarious sharing in the experiences of others. Of course, undue strain on youthful emotions is to be avoided, but properly safeguarded, the task can be carried through without hazard.

#### *The Educated Citizen Acts To Correct Unsatisfactory Conditions*

In the light of democratic ideals, current conditions appear to be far from satisfactory. If the result of sensitizing the student to the social situation is merely acute observation or pointless curiosity or a vague sympathy, not enough has been accomplished. A broad, expanding, and active humanitarianism

should be the personal possession of all. Fortunately, among children and adolescents, sympathies run strong and the desire to do good is readily elicited. The schools should seek to give concrete exercise to these feelings and impulses on the level of the young people involved. Of course, sentimentality has to be avoided. It is one thing to wish to relieve human distress; it is something else to devise measures of relief that are constructive.

### *The Educated Citizen Seeks To Understand Social Structures and Social Processes*

With the experts—the economists, political scientists, sociologists, and the rest—disagreeing in their interpretations of social phenomena, the path of the educator undertaking to deal with social activity is a thorny one. That the social sciences are still in an early stage of development must be frankly recognized. Furthermore, differences in opinion on social issues arise not alone from the lack of knowledge and the other difficulties of scientific inquiry, but even more from the differing sets of values which, perhaps unknown even to himself, each student brings to the study of social problems. Making appropriate allowances, however, for inherent difficulties and limitations, something substantial can be done in giving young people a more adequate knowledge than they now have of the nature of the society in which they live. Differences between wishful and realistic thinking can be exposed and the momentum of social processes and the inertia of social institutions brought home.

### *The Educated Citizen Has Defenses Against Propaganda*

The reporting of social events is characteristically loose and inaccurate, even when not purposely colored or dishonest. Let the students find out how well-nigh impossible it is to ascertain just what happens in the course of a labor dispute. Let them follow, through a variety of journals of differing eco-

nomie and political attitudes, the day-to-day record of the occurrences in a local strike. The typical conflict of testimony of eyewitnesses, say of an automobile accident, should be critically examined. The arts of propaganda and of modern advertising should be made known. The time has come to equip the individual citizen in the democratic state with reasonable defenses against the pressures of mass thinking and feeling exerted nowadays through billboard and poster, press, radio, and film. A healthy measure of skepticism about social data should reinforce an aggressive search for reliable information in the training of youth for more effective participation in democratic ways of living.

### *The Educated Citizen Respects Differences of Opinion*

Even when it is possible to locate all pertinent facts and to agree concerning these facts, social situations still suggest to different persons a wide variety of practical, and yet often sharply conflicting, measures. Tolerance is, of course, one of the hallmarks of the truly democratic society, and lack of tolerance one of the sharply distinguishing traits of the authoritarian state. Tolerance does not imply an absence of belief and conviction; in fact, were there no conflicting beliefs and convictions it would be impossible to exhibit tolerance. Certainly it is clear that no democratic society can afford to purchase tolerance at the cost of clear and confident thinking on the part of its citizens. Young people in the schools need to be taught to reach their own opinions and within reason to hold to them, at the same time accepting the fact that others are entitled to differing opinions honestly reached and similarly defended.

### *The Educated Citizen Has a Regard for the Nation's Resources*

Our national life and culture and, indeed, our very existence depend in the last analysis upon the availability of

essential natural resources and the use which is made of them. Forests, soils, grasslands, water, minerals, oil, fish, game, and scenic beauty are among the rich natural endowments of the area of the North American continent covered by the United States. Realization of the basic importance of these resources, determination to utilize them for the common good through long-range planning, and general knowledge of appropriate remedial and preventive conservation procedures are among the marks of the educated citizen. Since future welfare and safety depend on those things, the schools may well assume considerable responsibility for checking the ravages upon the heritage of the nation made by ignorance, indifference, carelessness, and unbridled selfishness. Instruction should include conservation problems of national and regional scope and may be most effective if organized in connection with the teaching of the natural sciences and the social studies at all levels of the school program. The school system will find cordial allies in this task in many departments of local, state, and federal government, and in many private agencies. In passing, it may be noted that there is need for materials on conservation which are written in a style suited to children and which are impartial and accurate. Reports of governmental and private investigations frequently meet the second criterion but seldom satisfy the first. Suitable materials on conservation should be included in standard textbooks and in other publications for use by children.

*The Educated Citizen Measures Scientific  
Advance by Its Contribution to the  
General Welfare*

We have seen in an earlier chapter how the application of science and invention to problems of industrial production, medicine, and human relationship has revolutionized our social and cultural customs and standards. Yet science in itself is entirely indifferent to moral values. Thanks to the discoveries and applications of science, electricity can be manu-



factured, stored, harnessed, and transported over hundreds of miles of wire. And at the end of that journey it will with perfect neutrality speed a streamlined train, light a scholar's desk, electrocute a criminal, operate a lifesaving pulmotor, or burn the toast. Again, the intricate chain of scientific discovery and invention which involves the manufacture of paper and ink, the linotype, and the great printing presses will place in our hands with equal indifference the finest literature or the veriest trash, the honest conclusions of the scholar or the most poisonous propaganda. The methods and findings of science, then, seek with considerable success to ignore ethical judgments. But the applications of science to the needs and desires of man are entirely subject to social and individual control.

Science instruction has been too largely concerned with attempting to produce scientists rather than with producing citizens who have an intelligent understanding of the methods, significance, and application of science, and who are determined that science shall function in the improvement of the everyday life of the people. The teacher of English literature, even at the college level, rarely cherishes the illusion that he is making novelists, poets, and dramatists. Science too is, for the mass of the people, a cultural subject. The emphasis should be placed upon the past and possible future applications of science to increase the well-being of mankind.

### *The Educated Citizen Is a Cooperating Member of the World Community*<sup>1</sup>

Modern conditions of national interdependence make membership in the world community inescapable. Education should make that membership cooperative and constructive.

Much is already being done to acquaint pupils with the nature of existing machinery for international relations and

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<sup>1</sup> For a more thorough discussion of this subject, see *Education and the People's Peace*. Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1943. 61 p.

with the truths of national history. The contributions of the various races and nations to civilization and culture, the sufferings and moral degradations brought about by war, and the superior value and importance of the arts of peace are subjects considered in many schoolrooms. All this is wholesome and should be extended.

### *The Educated Citizen Respects the Law*

All laws and other governmental controls are properly established by the people and their duly chosen representatives and are subject to popular review and revision. Certain essential rights of minorities are recognized and appeals for protection may be carried to the courts if these rights are invaded. Obedience to constituted authority, as manifested in law, is a necessary element in a well-ordered society. Disobedience and disrespect for law, on the other hand, are symptoms either of indifference to the welfare of others or of distrust of democratic processes. As compared with other countries, we are a lawbreaking, though by no means a lawless, nation. Many factors have been suggested as causes for the relatively high crime rates in this country. Whatever the cause, the schools should attempt through instruction and organization to develop an understanding of the nature of law and of its role in human affairs, to promote habits of willing and intelligent obedience, and to create an attitude of respect for law and an appreciation of the inherent dignity of the law-abiding citizen in a democracy.

Such a program does not commit the schools to an endorsement of every law on the statute books, but it does suggest that every citizen owes obedience *even to laws of which he does not approve*. His remedy is not to flout the law but to seek to change it. And a democratic government permits him to do this if he can convince others that such change would be in the interest of the general welfare.

## *The Educated Citizen Is Economically Literate*

Government has always been closely related to economic problems. Whether or not that relationship is becoming closer with the passage of time, it is certainly true that the major problems of public life have important economic aspects. The issues upon which elections turn, the questions which agitate the public mind, the problems debated by legislative bodies, and the agenda of public officers are very frequently economic in origin. The citizen of a democracy, therefore, needs to acquire the information, the experience, and the willingness to deal constructively with collective economic problems. Each needs also information, experience, and motivation to maintain his own economic contribution at a high level.

The person who is economically literate has found out by direct or vicarious experience that wealth is produced by work; that goods and services usually vary greatly in quality; that some advertising is truthful, some false, and all of it interested first of all in selling goods, services, or ideas; that collective expenditures, in cooperatives or in public finance, for example, may be either good or bad depending on the attendant circumstances; that getting something for nothing, through gambling in any of its forms, always means that the other fellow gets nothing for something; that every dollar spent is an economic ballot voting for necessities or for trash; that war is uneconomic because it uses natural resources to destroy human resources; and that individual economic advancement through deceit or exploitation of others is unworthy of an honest man.

The citizen who is economically literate is acquainted with certain broad economic issues, conditions, and procedures. He has become familiar through frequent usage with currently important economic concepts, with the ideas of supply and demand, investment and profit, capital and labor, scarcity and abundance, monopoly, the market, wages and

prices. He knows certain facts which are crucial to the economic life of the country—its basic physical and human resources, its potential and actual productivity, the distribution of incomes and wealth, and the degree of concentration or dispersal of ownership and management. Only as a growing degree of competence and interest in these matters is diffused among the people can democracy function in the teeth of technological change.

### *The Educated Citizen Accepts His Civic Duties*

Every American citizen lives under at least three governments: local, state, and national. This arrangement in itself makes for complexity. The attempted readjustments of our political arrangements to a highly industrialized civilization have rapidly increased this complexity during the past quarter of a century.

It can no longer be accepted as a truism that the person who is a good citizen in his local community is automatically qualified for citizenship in the state or the nation. The requirements for the latter have grown to include a broad knowledge of national political affairs and the ability to exercise reliable judgment on problems which have their source far from the home community.

Thus, more and more knowledge must go into the equipment of the educated and intelligent voter. The fact that thirty million qualified voters do not exercise their franchise, even in the most exciting elections, certainly indicates a potential danger. It is even more alarming when voters are ignorant of the issues at stake. All too many of these latter have been persuaded to come to the polls with a feeling that their duty is done when they vote, no matter how little civic information and intelligence support their decision.

An urgent responsibility of the schools, then, is to lead the young citizens of America to discover the knowledge, and the means of obtaining the knowledge, which will enable them to discharge their duties intelligently. In order

to do this they will need, among other things, to study all forms of government and economy, the advantages and disadvantages of each, honestly comparing one with another. And this judgment has been rendered essential not only by the complexity of the situation but also by the efforts made by propagandists to take advantage of the present confusion.

But the interests of the school do not end with knowledge. The next step is to create the desire to act upon the judgments which the learners have made. Knowledge is power only as it is translated into action. Furthermore, knowledge alone does not lead to right action. For example, knowledge of human nature is invaluable to teachers and ministers in helping them to render better services, but it is just as useful to the confidence man, the pickpocket, or the purveyor of falsehood.

The emotional side cannot be neglected, but its education is a process which requires the utmost care. It is a matter of greatest moment that feelings have their source in the individual's tempered judgment, rather than in the notions and prejudices of some organization or person. It is essential that future citizens learn that the means for solving the many distressing social problems of today must be the means of democracy: discussion, action through legally provided channels, change of present governmental machinery when such change becomes necessary to progress. Force, craft, bribery, threats, and appeals to emotion are processes of dictatorship in no way effective in the maintenance of a democratic form of government.

The citizens of the future need to develop keen judgment in political matters in order to distinguish between those who would maintain democracy through democratic processes and those who are endeavoring to destroy its spirit, while they burn incense on the most conspicuous altars to the word itself. Governmental problems and the broader problems of society require calm reasoning, not hysteria, for their solution.

In addition to voting, and voting with a ballot charged with good intentions, sound reasoning, and basic information, there are other civic responsibilities for which the schools should prepare the present and rising generations. One of the most important of these relates to the support of public activities in those spheres where private activity is not at least equally efficient and productive. The operation of the postal system, for example, is one among many accepted public responsibilities. The questions are always open, however, as to whether other services might not be added to those presently discharged by governmental agencies and whether, on the contrary, the government is performing services which might be better handled by private initiative.

The consideration of such questions is a necessary activity of an educated citizen and his schooling should fit him to engage in it. He should learn that there is nothing inherently bad or inherently virtuous in expanded governmental services; he should understand the circumstances in modern social life which have brought about the extension of governmental functions and which make further extension probable in the future; he should be quick to devise methods for utilizing public action in the public interest; and finally he should understand that the process of taxation according to ability to pay is the means by which all of us, working together, produce services and benefits needed by all which each of us working alone might not be able to create or enjoy.

There are other rights and responsibilities with which the educated citizen of democracy should be acquainted; for example, a general but not of course detailed or technical knowledge of his rights and responsibilities before the law as plaintiff, defendant, witness, and jurymen. The list of specific civic responsibilities might be further extended but the three that have been mentioned—intelligent and socially minded voting, an appreciation of governmental services, and a layman's knowledge of the law—appear to be outstanding needs at the present time.

## *The Educated Citizen Acts upon an Unswerving Loyalty to Democratic Ideals*

Most of us have too little notion of the long struggle through which our present privileges were won. The drama of this historic record should be presented adequately in our schools. No stone should be left unturned in the effort to give youth a full realization of what democracy means, of the privileges which it affords, of the ways and means through which, with work and patience, it is to be more successfully achieved.

It is important, too, that loyalty to the democratic ideal and appreciation of its possibilities be supported by an acute awareness of the factors which threaten it. Although these factors are not easily identified, certain items would be included in any comprehensive list.

First, our inadequate control of the application of science and technology has brought about at intervals prolonged depressions, widespread unemployment, and other social ills, accompanied by unrest, insecurity, and general dissatisfaction.

Another factor which threatens democracy is the weakening of religious convictions and of moral codes without the development of adequate ethical controls to take their place.

Again, democracy is always in danger when government shows itself incapable of meeting justifiable human needs or when leadership in public affairs tends to express the momentary popular fancy or selfish minority interests.

There is a threat to democracy in that naive equalitarianism which refuses to recognize and act upon the indubitable fact that individual human beings differ greatly from one another in important respects. Whether one believes that these differences are inborn or acquired may modify one's opinion as to how they should be treated, but under any circumstances it is both futile and dangerous to deny their present existence.

Democracy is endangered also by the resort to force and violence in the settlement of controversial issues, with the accompanying decay of the ability and willingness to think dispassion-

ately. Private control of police and military power and the open violation of law with impunity are examples of conditions which elsewhere led to the downfall of democracy.

Democracy must meet conditions created by modern propaganda which, without control and in the hands of pressure groups, threatens to destroy even the semblance of social unity. With these new tools of propaganda the demagog is given new weapons. In the absence of a well-informed public opinion he may advocate policies which are popular without regard for the possibility of achieving them. By reaching large audiences in effective ways, he may lead many people to accept proposals which he, himself, knows are entirely impossible or inexpedient.

A highly complex society which tends to distract the interests of men and women from civic and social questions is obviously difficult to operate in a democratic manner.

Finally, we may mention a factor which is, to a degree, an outcome of all that have been mentioned—the lack of social discipline and unwillingness of many individuals to accept their just responsibilities for the social welfare. An ignorant people, who lack access to the facts on social issues or who lack an appreciation of democratic values, is perhaps the greatest danger to democracy. An intelligent understanding of these dangers should accompany and intensify loyalty to democracy as a way of life.

Let it not be thought that responsibility for the attainment of the objectives here described devolves solely upon the social studies. The entire curriculum, the entire life of the school, in fact, should be a youthful experience in democratic living, quickening social inventiveness and agitating the social conscience. So are citizens for the democratic state successfully educated.



## VIII.

### CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE ATTAINMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

THE purposes of education proposed in this report are not offered as a complete solution of the problems of American democracy. The results achieved, even by the best schools today, doubtless fall somewhat short of the objectives we have hopefully proposed. Many schools in which these goals would be readily accorded lip service may actually, though unwittingly, seek very different objectives, perhaps even objectives of a directly opposing nature. As in other periods and places, a gap forms between the ideal and the accomplishment; a disturbing contrast arises between accepted aims and their attainment in practice.

#### *Many Factors Condition the Success of Education*

The chief function of this final chapter is to show the relation between some of the everyday problems of the schools and the objectives proposed in the preceding sections. For this reason, frank and realistic treatment has been attempted.

In general, three groups of conditioning factors limit the school's effectiveness in reaching its objectives: (1) the inherent quality of the human stock which is to be educated, (2) the effects of other educative and maleducative agencies outside the schools, and (3) the efficiency of the schools themselves. The existence of factors which condition the success of the schools should not harass or discourage those responsible for improvement. Every hindrance to ideal educational progress enlarges the opportunity of the school.

## THE HUMAN STOCK

### *Variations Exist in the Human Material To Be Educated*

The school works with human beings. The native and acquired abilities or disabilities in the individuals whom the school is attempting to serve constitute not only the basis of progress, but also stubborn limitations to effective educational and social progress. No matter how skillfully the work may be done, there are limits to the adaptations which the school at present can bring about in the capacities, the information, the habits, and the dispositions of the individual learner. Many children have inherited or acquired handicaps which, however proficiently the school may work, interfere with the realization of educational purposes.

### *The Schools Must Begin with Children as They Are*

It would, no doubt, be gratifying to teachers of music, for instance, if every child would learn to appreciate and understand to the full the intricate beauties of symphonic music. Every teacher of English literature would be pleased to find all of his pupils able to read with pleasure and understanding the more difficult essays, poems, and plays. Every teacher of economics would, no doubt, like to help every child to secure a complete understanding of the various theories of money and banking. Every teacher of industrial arts would be pleased to find each pupil sufficiently equipped with manual dexterity to learn to do highly skilled work in that field.

Some few children are so intellectually gifted, so esthetically sensitive, or so apt in manual skills that they seem scarcely to need either school or teacher. The democratic ideal requires that no pains be spared to offer a rich and significant educational program to these gifted children, to the end that their learning shall have maximum value.

Other children are dull, unresponsive, or clumsy. The process of education is difficult for them and for their teachers. Yet these children, too, must be served by the schools in the interest of the democracy to which the American people rightfully aspire. Although not all learners can attain to the educational aims set up as desirable, the aims must be maintained in the interest of all, including those unable to reach them completely. Otherwise there can be no social direction for the guidance of this agency of democracy.

A condition which often prevents the application of this philosophy is overemphasis on marks and promotions from grade to grade. These devices can do great damage to education if they are regarded by teachers and children as ends in themselves.

### *The Objectives of Education Are Goals To Be Approximated*

Education hitches its wagon to a star. It hopes, aspires, and struggles. The democratic theory of social life presupposes that every child and every other member of society must have at least some degree of capacity for improvement and growth. That capacity, however large or small it may be for any given individual, is the fulcrum for the lifting power of democracy. The purposes of education might perhaps be called "directives" more appropriately than "objectives," although the latter word is sanctioned by long usage. These purposes indicate the *direction* toward which growth should occur. Failure to reach a particular end point with perfection by every child does not constitute failure of the school or of the democratic ideal. Failure comes only when no progress is made.

Once these concepts of *approximation* and *direction* are grasped, the deficiencies in human material change in significance. If children are less gifted, in one way or another, than we could desire, we may be satisfied with a delayed and approximate attainment of the objectives. But such approximation is not to be regarded as a weak surrender of ideals to

practical demands. On the contrary, to make the ability of the learner and the efficiency of the school as great as possible is the practical means by which our ideals may be approached. It is firmly believed that the objectives proposed in this report could be closely approximated by practically all boys and girls, provided the maleducative influences of life outside the schools could be decreased.

## OTHER EDUCATIVE FORCES

### *The Cultural Environment Conditions the Success of Education*

Among all the factors which affect the efficiency of education, none is more powerful or more subtle in operation than the climate of ideas and customs in which we live. Some of these cultural surroundings may actually hinder the attainment of the goals proposed for education. The environment of ideas, folkways, and social customs, though often unobtrusive and unrecognized, must be given due consideration in considering the attainment of educational purposes. It must be recognized at the same time that this environment is itself undergoing a continuing change due to educational efforts and due to changes in the physical surroundings.

On each child and adult conflicting loyalties pull and tug, coloring outlooks and directing behavior. The school itself shares in these tensions and is, in a sense, a party to the conflict. For example, the viewpoint prevails quite widely that it is the prerogative of the state to prescribe the school program and to determine its purposes and that the proper loyalty of a teacher is to the state and to the political representatives of the state. That the responsibility of teachers is to the truth and to the promotion of the general welfare through the use of the truth has not yet been accepted or indeed widely understood in democracies or elsewhere. Yet a realistic attempt to determine whether a given series of educational purposes can be attained must recognize that there will be serious opposition

unless the prevailing concept of education's relation to the state is profoundly modified.

This is perhaps the most striking of many illustrations which might be given concerning the effect of the uninstitutionalized, ideological factors which condition the success of an educational program.

### *Schools Often Compete with Maleducative Forces*

Most children are under the direct control and influence of the school for a relatively brief period of time. Ordinarily, a child does not enter school until six years of life have been completed. Those first years may be lived under varying conditions. They may be marked by happiness and abundance or by misery and squalor. However spent, these years are probably the most important ones, educationally, of the entire life-span.

Once in school, the average American child now attends for about ten years. The youth of twenty-one, therefore, has probably been out of school for more years of his life than he has been in school. Furthermore, school "years" are not years by the calendar. The schools of the United States were in session, on the average, about 174 days in 1942, but the actual attendance of each pupil was only for 149 days. The school "day" includes only six hours or so out of the twenty-four. The average American child probably attends school for something less than nine thousand hours all told.

During the many hours when the child is not in school a variety of educational forces are playing upon him. Some of these forces are distantly related to the objectives of the school; some have similar or identical objectives; some have objectives which are directly opposite to those which are approved by the school. The educative forces of society outside the school, therefore, occupy an important position in the control of educational progress.

The school undertakes to teach correct speaking; many homes and neighborhoods teach just the opposite. The school teaches respect for human life, safety, and happiness; many social practices (a commercialized automobile race or partial enforcement of traffic laws, for example) teach the opposite. The school teaches healthful living; the incomes available to many American families compel a low standard of living which is detrimental to health. The school praises literary excellence; outside the school children are bombarded with printed pulp which debases their speech and degrades their tastes. The school teaches respect for law and honest government; the practices of corrupt political machines teach the opposite. The school teaches temperance and moderation in all things, "nothing in excess," as the Greeks taught; unrestrained and untruthful advertising (of liquor, for example) and the sequences from some modern motion pictures teach the opposite. The school teaches democracy; some aspects of life outside and even within the school may negate democracy.

The work of the school must be both reparative and developmental with reference to many of the objectives proposed. The more time and energy which the school must allot to repairing the damage done by other agencies, the less emphasis can be placed on positive effort to attain the accepted or desirable aims.

It is a strange paradox that a society should spend billions to support a school system dedicated to certain high purposes and then require it to divert a large part of the money in order to repair damages which that society itself encourages or tolerates. It is even stranger that this society, and most of the individuals who compose it, sincerely place a high value on the happiness and future welfare of children while permitting all sorts of harmful conditions to continue to destroy the very happiness and welfare so pathetically coveted for the young. At their best the schools can make boys and girls only a little better than their elders. Citizens who want young people to assume social responsibility cannot look tolerantly on disregard of social responsibilities among adults.

## *Many Potentially Educative Forces May Assist the School*

Encouraging, however, is the fact that many nonschool agencies are constructive helpers in the work that the schools attempt to do. The objectives of education are cherished by such agencies no less than by the schools. Furthermore, even the maleducative forces in American society can be slowly changed by education itself. Educational gains are usually cumulative. Each generation strives to give its children a better preparation for life than its own.

But optimism and patience are not necessarily associated with indifference and inactivity. There are some definite things which schools and teachers may do now, day in and day out, to improve the quality of human materials and to remove maleducative influences from the environment of the learner. While the primary contribution of the school is its long-range educative service to society, the immediate measures available for direct action need not be disregarded. A school which makes a careful, scientific study of the handicaps and assets of each learner, to the end that he may be properly guided, has taken the first step to attainment of its objectives. A school which helps parents in their homes to do a better job of educating their own children will have less to correct. A school which links its efforts to those of other like-motivated agencies makes all such efforts more effective. A school where teachers maintain close contact with the homes of the children and participate in community activities can more readily offset adverse out-of-school forces. A school which is a center of wholesome recreation and education for an entire neighborhood is already doing much to offset undesirable influences. A school which can arrange to be open on Saturdays and Sundays, in the late afternoons and evenings, as a community center, is not only grasping a direct educational opportunity but is making all of its "regular" work more effective by reducing the effectiveness of opposing forces.

Frequently parent education is the key to helping the child. Units of educational energy spent on parents may sometimes go further than the same number of units spent on the child. If parent education is effective, it does double duty, first to the parent and then to the child. It is the job of the home to provide the child with the vitamins of human emotional development, with security, affection, and the sense of accomplishment. In the event of the failure of the community and the home to provide these necessities of life, the schools or some other social agency must try to compensate for their lack.<sup>1</sup>

### EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The attainment of better schools may require either greater knowledge as to the best means of educational procedure, or the removal of tradition and inertia which prevent change in desirable direction, or, more commonly, both of these measures. A few areas in which these requirements exist will be briefly treated.

#### *Securing an Adequate Number of Competent Teachers Is a Critical Problem*

Qualified teachers are essential. The lack of this asset, however, cannot be solved by caustic criticism of those who are now teaching in the public schools. After all, every state has laws governing the certification of teachers and the present incumbents have met the requirements of those laws. Often, indeed, voluntarily and at no small personal sacrifice, they have gone beyond the legally required minima. Furthermore, it must be remembered that neither the social nor the economic status of the teaching profession in general is such as to make it highly attractive to many of the more capable young people now preparing for their life work. Nearly one-fourth of the public-school teachers are paid less than \$1200 a

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<sup>1</sup> The place of the school among the other public social agencies of the community is discussed in *Social Services and the Schools* issued by the Educational Policies Commission.



year. The social status of the teacher in many small American communities confers few satisfactions to compensate for the relatively low economic status. Under the circumstances it need be no occasion for astonishment that thousands of teachers are quite unprepared intellectually or professionally to contribute effectively to worthy educational objectives. Better status and better qualifications for teachers must be brought about simultaneously and promptly.

The drag of easy complacency, which makes itself felt in all social organizations, penetrates in subtle ways into the affairs of the schoolroom. However, it must not be assumed that every unfavorable condition existing within the schools can be ascribed to the professional staff alone. Many of these unfavorable conditions are subject to only limited control by the members of the staff. For example, the failure to use up-to-date books and teaching equipment hampers the work of many schoolrooms. This *may* be due to unprogressive teaching and administration. In actual fact, however, it is more commonly due to the unwillingness of the public to provide sufficient funds for the purchase of equipment.

It is essential that institutions engaged in preparing teachers have a vision with regard to educational objectives of a depth and breadth at least equal to that of the public-school systems into which these prospective teachers will enter. Institutions for preparing teachers should exhibit an unflagging audacity in their leadership. They should be the cutting edge for the advance of the public schools. There are many existing institutions which meet this requirement admirably. There are some which fail to meet it almost entirely. There are some institutions engaged in preparing teachers where the educational philosophy is fundamentally different from that upon which the objectives proposed in this volume rest. If these objectives are sound and if the teacher-preparing institutions continue to ignore them, teachers prepared in such institutions will have to be retrained in a new philosophy on the job with consequent delay and inefficiency.

If the objectives of American education are to be attained, the gaps in what may be called the "social education" of the staff must be narrowed. Creditable work is being developed in technical training. But the mechanics of educational administration and teaching can be overemphasized at the expense of the underlying social philosophy. The preparation of educational workers should include a broad general education as well as adequate professional preparation. The content and scope of the general education should differ very little, if any, from that for other well-educated citizens, and should be directed toward sound scholarship and a cultural background in the major areas of human experience. A community should expect its teachers and school officials to be the representatives of a high level of humane culture. Much of the preparation of administrators as well as that of teachers now tends to make them provincials in the geography of interests and to narrow rather than broaden their social outlook. The general education of any worker in the field of education should acquaint him with the various institutions and forces that influence modern life and with the dominant current trends and issues in the major areas of learning—sciences, letters, philosophy, sociology, and economics.

*Conditions Surrounding the Administration  
of Education Must Be Improved<sup>2</sup>*

American education developed in part out of conflicts of contending interests. Among these conflicts were those which led to the removal of property restrictions on the ballot; to the abolition of imprisonment for debt; to the improvement of the conditions of workers generally, and of women and children especially; to the taxation for school support; and to other humanitarian and social reforms. Great statesmen have

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<sup>2</sup> Educational structure and administration have received attention from the Educational Policies Commission in: *The Structure and Administration of Education in American Democracy*. Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1938. 128 p.

championed the cause of popular education in the face of indifference, opposition, or even physical danger. The history of education in this country is enriched by the story of men and women, apostolic in their fervor, tireless in their effort, who took part in these struggles.

With many educational administrators the proper direction of the public schools continues to be a dedication. Their faith and courage and energy have been the principal sources from which the democratic theories of public education have sprung into principles and passed into practices to become convictions with most of the American people. Some of them profess in their work a simple creed. They believe that the real values to this world are human values; that real gains in civilization are made only through the improvement of mankind; that a nation moves forward only on the feet of its children; and that the influence of great teachers outlives that of kings, politicians, or military leaders of their age. The extension of such faith would greatly aid education to meet its responsibility in American democracy.

Not all public-school officials represent the best of the profession. Education, like every other human institution, has a share of novices and mediocrities. For, although there has been improvement in educational administration there is much room for more. And with an increase in the interest of the public, there will be an increased public demand for administrative leaders who are broadly educated and genuinely cultivated, inspired by the patriot's dream, and qualified to perform their technical tasks wisely and effectively. At the earliest opportunity the profession should establish certain advancing goals for the various types of school administrative work.

### *Partisan Political Interference Continues To Block Educational Progress*

When partisan political considerations enter the schoolroom door professional management soon flies out of the window. The majority of the chief state school officers are still elected

upon political ballot; many others hold office on conditions which involve partisan political considerations. The county school superintendency in most states remains definitely a political office with minimum attention to professional qualifications. When school administrators are chosen on such a basis they are definitely identified with partisan politics and are often bound by party pledges. The proper duties of such educational officials require natural abilities, educational and professional training, and other qualities which are only rarely reconciled with those qualities which usually commend men to political bosses. The immediate removal of all forms of political pressure and interference in the administration of schools would help greatly in the attainment of educational objectives.<sup>8</sup>

### *Legislation Exercises Control over the Curriculum*

Political influence reaches even nearer to the classroom through legal mandates affecting changes in the school curriculum. The nature and extent of this influence is seldom realized by the public. Modifications in the curriculum may come about through the initiative of teachers, research workers, supervisors, and other school people. They may also come about through the initiative of individuals and groups of individuals outside the school.

The legal right of the state to determine what shall be taught in the schools is fully recognized. The methods by which this right should be exercised is another matter, and an important educational question. If it goes no farther than to provide that a particular subject shall be taught, without specifying the length of time it shall be taught or what shall be included in the content, then the legal provision may work little hardship upon curriculum makers, regardless of whether they believe that subject should be legally stipulated or not. On the other

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<sup>8</sup> The case for a high degree of freedom in educational matters has been stated by the Educational Policies Commission in: *The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy*. Washington, D. C.: the Commission, 1937. 129 p.

hand, laws which prescribe curriculum content, teaching processes, and time allotments may not only cripple the initiative of the teacher but prevent the attainment of socially valuable objectives.

Furthermore, laws which obviously reflect the vested interests of certain minority groups may inject into the curriculum a body of content that is of neither real interest to the general public, nor of real value in the attainment of educational goals.

### *Local Units of School Administration Are Often Unplanned*

Other administrative conditions that delay or prevent the attainment of educational aims require brief attention. Prevailing conditions in many of the small rural schools obstruct efforts to obtain desirable educational results. These schools are staffed as a rule by the least mature and least well-prepared teachers. There are some rural schools which seek the educational objectives here proposed, but they are relatively few in number.

Inadequate instruction in these schools results directly from inadequacies in the teaching staff. While prepared and better paid teachers are being recruited, however, it is possible to make significant improvements with the present staff by providing sound and helpful supervision, research, guidance, and health services. To do this with reasonable economy will, in many states, require the enlargement of administrative units. Even where consolidation of schools (into larger *attendance* units) is impractical or undesirable, a larger *administrative* unit, adequately staffed to give the educational services just mentioned, is entirely possible.

### *Professional Unity Is Necessary*

Another somewhat related condition that hinders educational progress is the lack of coordination of the various parts of the school system. This separateness results in needless rivalries, unseemly competition for funds, and, most serious of all, in lack of that articulation which would permit steady progress

of children, youths, and adults from one stage of educational development to another. Colleges and high schools are still not closely enough in touch with one another; in some states elementary and secondary schools, outside of the larger cities, are in entirely separate school systems; liberal arts colleges and professional schools tend to regard each other with suspicion; vocational education at the secondary-school level is too often regarded as entirely separate from the general or common educational program. These are but a few indications of the lack of unity in American education. An ability and a willingness to keep the whole educational program in full view need to be systematically cultivated.

### *Schools in Many Communities Are Underfinanced*

Problems in the field of school finances are many and complex. They involve: (a) questions relating to the most efficient expenditure of funds already available; (b) questions relating to means for increasing the total amount of funds; and (c) questions relating to the distribution of the burden of school support among various geographical and political areas and among various socio-economic groups in the total population.

To remedy the chronic condition of insufficient financial support is important. The services of qualified workers cost money; a sufficient number of workers to do an acceptable job costs still more money; providing these workers with suitable equipment and housing them under favorable conditions for work make further inescapable financial demands. Even a remote approximation to the objectives proposed is blocked by the overwhelming odds faced by many poverty-ridden schools today. At the same time, some critics of the schools look askance on requests for more appropriations until the work of the school is improved. Thus results an impasse which cannot be broken except by concerted efforts to secure more funds and improve the schools simultaneously.

There are aspects of schoolwork which contribute meagerly to the attainment of the objectives of education as here pro-

posed. Funds should be so allocated that preference is given to those services of the schools which make the largest contribution to the objectives for the largest number of pupils over the longest period of time. Activities which do not contribute to the objectives should not be financed at all. This is the real essence of "economy in school finance."

Glaring defects in the tax systems of the localities, states, and nation continue to be ignored for selfish protection or partisan expediency. A modern, equitable, and efficient tax system for providing school revenues is essential. The taxable wealth and income of the nation is distributed unevenly over its area. Some jurisdictions have relatively many children and relatively limited taxpaying ability and vice versa. Measures for equalizing the burden of school support within and between states are essential.

The removal of these unfavorable financial conditions confronts us with two problems. First and most important, our economic order must be made effective enough to provide the funds necessary for schools which will really approximate the objectives proposed. The second problem concerns the ways and means by which the necessary funds may be secured. This, in turn, involves questions of educational finance and of public finance in general as well as the public relations of the school system.<sup>4</sup>

*Public Indifference, Antagonism, or  
Ignorance Must Be Supplanted by  
Effective Lay Relationships*

The ultimate control of American education rests with the people. The theory of school administration under which we operate requires that such control be truly representative and, at the same time, gives appropriate opportunity for the use of expert professional service in the work of the schools. Actually, these conditions often fail to develop. The board

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<sup>4</sup> The Educational Policies Commission discusses the economic bases of school finance in *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy*.

of education is not always truly representative of the entire people with respect to schools. Most members of schoolboards display intelligence, honesty, and devotion to the public welfare; some however, are not qualified for their important tasks.

Perhaps the most crucial problem now confronting American education is the discovery and development of ways and means for securing competent lay control over the schools. Our desire to preserve the form and spirit of democracy confronts us with the necessity for discovering and opening up channels by which the American people may really exercise effective control over their interests in education. Our desire for efficiency and service demands some feasible working relationship between lay control and professional work.

The present forms of lay relationship to education are working imperfectly. Various suggestions for changes have been advanced. The direct representation of various vocational classes and other special interests on schoolboards; the establishment of advisory groups to the schoolboard, following somewhat the English plan; the limited use of co-optation as a method of selecting schoolboard members; the representation of the teaching profession on lay boards of control; the abolition of schoolboards in favor of a commission form of government—these are some of the more commonly offered proposals. Meanwhile, many lay boards of education, as variously constituted, continue to render devoted and invaluable service to public education.

*The Schools Have a Responsibility for  
Public Opinion with Reference to  
Their Own Work*

A share of the responsibility for the existence of defects within the school system itself must be borne by the general public. The public has often been indifferent to the problems and needs of the schools. The public all too frequently permits political interference with professional matters. It has refused to heed competent professional advice with regard to the ad-



ministration and organization of schools. It has sometimes placed in office schoolboard members who have been actually dishonest or, at best, grossly unqualified. Not all of these conditions may be charged entirely to public indifference; the necessary professional leadership has not always been offered. In any case, the ignorance and indifference of the public regarding educational objectives, methods, and problems are conditions that retard educational progress and frustrate the achievement of desirable results. It is the public which must supply the funds for conducting the work of the schools. It is the public which selects the state legislators, the boards of education, and the other agencies which give official sanction to educational objectives and educational policy.

One of the most damaging evidences of the limitations of the schools in the past is the very existence of a considerable body of influential public opinion which is indifferent or even unfriendly to public education. This condition has always prevailed to some degree in this country. With few exceptions, the individuals who compose the public are or have been under the tutelage of the public-school system. Yet even today, most of our schools are graduating boys and girls who have little or no appreciation of the essential role which the public schools play in their own lives and in a democratic civilization. A wider social intelligence concerning the place of education in American democracy is needed. The courts, the legislative bodies, family life, recreational agencies, and many other important social institutions are studied with care, but the school, the one social institution which directly touches the lives of all American youth, is rarely discussed within its own walls.

Many intelligent citizens have sincere doubts as to the wisdom of some modern school procedures. One such honest and inquiring mind is worth a hundred uninformed friends and a thousand captious critics. To explain and justify desirable departures from tradition is an important and continuing phase of educational leadership. The laity should be encouraged especially to consider such educational problems as the basic social

philosophy of the school, objectives, finance, child health, and public welfare. The contributions of the laity from such fields as medicine, psychiatry, public health, public finance, social service, architecture, and the religious ministry should be sought, as well as the contribution which every adult should make as a citizen of a democracy. The contribution of parents, as such, through parent-teacher organizations is exceptionally valuable because of their immediate contact with the children and their immediate interest in their welfare and happiness.

Efforts to take the public into *account* must be supplemented by efforts to take the public into *confidence* and, finally, into *partnership*.

### *Methods and Materials of Instruction Must Be Remade To Contribute to Major Objectives*

The center of emphasis in education is being shifted from the program of studies to the individual learner. There is a closer concern with the major strategy of the classroom as opposed to the minor tactics of subjectmatter arrangement. We are beginning to study each child as a unitary, unique individual and to offer guidance, in an intelligent and sympathetic way, to each one in accordance with his needs. The clinical care and investigation which we provide for the maladjusted child should not be diminished. But what social advantage and what personal happiness might be realized if we exhibited equal concern for the *normal* and *gifted* individuals! This is not merely a question of prevention before cure or of the "stitch in time." It is not merely or even primarily a question of saving money for society by preventing crime and other forms of maladjustment. It is a question of making each individual maximally competent to achieve for himself the democratic ideal. This will require curriculum revision in light of the stated objectives.

### *Fundamental Changes Are Necessary*

The process of educational reconstruction must penetrate deeply; it must not balk at leaping the barriers set up by the

traditional school program. It must think beyond mere "shifting" courses and adding or subtracting "topics."

Here is a scene for the pen of a satirist. *Place*: an American high school. *Setting*: An era marked by confused loyalties, by unrest and deprivation, by much unnecessary ill-health, by high-pressure propaganda, by war, by the aftermath of war, by many broken or ill-adjusted homes, by foolish spending, by high crime rates, by bad housing, and by a myriad of other urgent, real human problems. And what are the children in this school, in this age, in this culture, learning? They are learning that the square of the sum of two numbers equals the sum of their squares plus twice their product; that Millard Fillmore was the thirteenth President of the United States and held office from January 10, 1850, to March 4, 1853; that the capital of Honduras is Tegucigalpa; that there were two Peloponnesian Wars and three Punic Wars; that Latin verbs meaning command, obey, please, displease, serve, resist, and the like take the dative; and that a gerund is a neuter verbal noun used in the oblique cases of the singular and governing the same case as its verb.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The items of information just listed are entirely suitable for study by some children. But for the great majority of the boys and girls who now attend American schools such learning is transitory and of extremely little value.

Let us be even more specific, with no effort, however, to be comprehensive. *English* as now taught in most schools places too great emphasis on formal grammar and on the dissection of "classics." Whatever may be the merits of such exercises as a preparation for a career as an author, the great majority of American boys and girls will profit more by a wide-ranging program of reading for enjoyment and fact-gathering. A program of instruction in literature which makes people dislike the writings of Shakespeare, Scott, and Emerson destroys even the possibility of its own usefulness. *Mathematics*, as now taught, is a serious obstacle to many children. The numbers studying

advanced theoretical mathematics should be reduced. An appreciation of the role of mathematics in civilization, and ability to deal with general mathematics as applied to everyday problems, and the fundamental skills of arithmetic should be provided for general consumption. *Languages*, ancient and modern, are now studied by thousands of children who will never acquire sufficient skill in them to be able to translate a single page or to conduct the simplest conversation. *Science* is too often taught as though it were a preparation for an engineering college. Much of the instruction now offered in *music*, *art*, and *manual training* is highly formalized, aimed at the preparation of technicians rather than critical users and appreciators. A great deal of *vocational education* has little relation to success on the job. *History* and the other *social studies* are still so organized in some schools that little sense of reality is preserved and direct contact with present issues studiously avoided. All of this illustrates the general fact that education has, on the whole, been altogether too much concerned with facts, and too little concerned with values.

All of these conditions do not exist in many schools; some of them exist in almost every school; the trend is distinctly hopeful. The current tendency to reevaluate, in the light of realistic objectives, all the activities of the common schools is a wholesome one. It should be speeded up and greatly widened in its scope. While there is need to examine present prevailing practices and subjectmatter to see how they may contribute to the objectives of education, this process must be safeguarded against complacent rationalization. There is even greater need to discover new curriculum emphases, new teaching materials, and new groupings of subjectmatter which will contribute directly to the attainment of the purposes proposed.

*Active Participation of Teachers in  
Formulating Educational Policy Is  
Essential*

The detailed preparation of course of study materials by

teachers, alone or in committees, has often been successfully undertaken. But such work is significant only if it simultaneously increases the insight of the staff into the basic educational philosophy. To print new educational objectives does not necessarily abolish the old ones. It is relatively easy to tell teachers what to do. When thus directed, they usually try sincerely to "go through the motions." In curriculum revision, however, "the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Vigilance must be constantly employed to guard against the devastating impact of the printed word upon independent thought.

The subtleties of the educational process and the infinite variety of human reactions effectively bar the application of rules of thumb to the kind of education which truly serves the objectives of the democratic ideal. The industrial distinction between the engineer and the routine mechanic has little value in educational practice. The supreme function of the school is that of the teacher. Educational progress results from improved teaching, and in no other way whatsoever. The teaching functions of the school should not be subordinated to those of administration, research, or record keeping.

The proper role of the well-prepared teacher of today in formulating educational policy is not, however, limited to the fields of instruction and curriculum-making. In many school systems definite provisions have been developed for teachers to share fully and systematically in the study of all educational problems and in the development of comprehensive educational policies. In earlier years, when most teachers were transient employees, lacking in professional preparation and outlook, a case could be made for a benevolent dictatorship of the schools by a small group of administrative officers. Today, in schools where teachers are as well prepared professionally as the administrative group, there is need for a complete recognition of their professional position and of the unique and valuable contribution which they can make to all phases of educational service. Such recognition will require not only adjustments in the type of leadership provided by administrators, but also an enlarged

sense of professional responsibility on the part of a well-prepared teaching staff.

*Learning Takes Place in Selecting Purposes  
as Well as in Achieving Them*

Schools should promote their objectives by providing for and encouraging greater initiative on the part of the learners in setting up objectives, selecting methods of study, and appraising results. An excellent example of such participation is found in reports to parents formulated by children and teacher together. The essential problem here is to identify the learner's interests with adult values. Even in comparatively recent years, we regarded children as adults in miniature. Now the pendulum is reaching the other extreme and we see some tendency to treat adolescents (and even adults) as if they were children. In providing educational experiences it is possible to do too much as well as too little. Schools which oversupervise, overstimulate, and overpower defeat their own purposes. A middle ground is sought, based on understanding of the nature of childhood and adolescence and of the existence of social trends which limit the possibility of securing gainful occupation, postpone marriage and parenthood, and in a thousand other ways fundamentally affect educational processes and agencies.

*High-Pressure Learning May Defeat Its  
Own Purpose*

Nursery schools and kindergartens provide carefully planned periods of relaxation in the midst of the school day's busy activities. At the other end of the educational ladder we find some colleges which offer definite provisions for recreation and rest. Except at these two extremes of the school experience, education is typically maintained at a furious and hard-driving pace. In high schools every moment of the student's day is carefully scheduled. Time between classes is brief; the students often move from one educational exposure to another at

double-quick tempo. Time for the lunch hour is often too limited. Rest periods after meals and after exercise, which every healthy animal takes without special instruction, are ordinarily lacking. Even the hours after school are planned for homework and various extracurriculum activities, all usually good and desirable things in themselves; but each making its demand for nervous and physical energy.

In some elementary schools there is something approaching the speed-up and stretch-out system. Standards for mastery of the fundamental skills are more difficult and insistent than ever before. More efficient methods of teaching and better materials of instruction make it entirely reasonable to expect a higher degree of accuracy in arithmetic, a more rapid rate of silent reading, and a greater and more exact mastery of almost all subjects. Along with the demand for perfection in the tool subjects, the elementary-school program has very wisely been enriched and varied by pupil projects and activities. Furthermore, the introduction of standardized tests, many of which are administered with stop-watch precision, has made possible a more rapid and exacting checkup on certain aspects of the educational product than ever before.

At this point let it be said, and with emphasis, that 100 per cent accuracy in the fundamentals, a varied program of school activities, and the use of standardized tests under a time limit, with reasonable precautions, are all good things in themselves. It is the total effect of these new tendencies which must not be overlooked. Social and economic trends are causing an increase in the number of years which the average person spends in school. Some of this leeway might well be used to allow for a more gradual mastery of the tools of learning, for the postponement of some types of learning until greater maturity is attained, and for a general adjustment of the speed of learning to the abilities of each child and to the inexorable demands of the human organism for rest and refreshment. To ignore these demands makes the race liable to the stern but just punishment of nature.

## *Measurement of Outcomes Must Be Directly Related to the Objectives*

Methods of measuring results and the measurement instruments themselves are powerful forces in shaping the *real* objectives of instruction. For example, it has been found that the content of instruction in New York high schools in general closely approximates the content of the Regent's Examinations, no matter what may be printed on the first page of course of study bulletins. The program of evaluation necessarily exerts influence upon the curriculum program. The two should recognize the same objectives.

Measurement should be set up as a means of learning, as an integral part of the learning process. It is, when properly considered, not the climax of the act of learning but the starting point for further learning; while it may write "finis" to one learning project, it should always beckon the student on to another. Measurement must be changed from a promotional hurdle in the road of learning to a gateway opening on new paths. But before measurement can move on to these functions it must be broadened in scope.

Most of the standardized testing instruments used in schools today deal largely with information. The same general condition doubtless holds with respect to most nonstandardized written examinations. There should be a much greater concern with the development of attitudes, interests, ideals, and habits. To focus tests exclusively on the acquisition and retention of information may recognize objectives of education which are relatively unimportant. Measuring the results of education must be increasingly concerned with such questions as these: Are the children growing in their ability to work together for a common end? Do they show greater skill in collecting and weighing evidence? Are they learning to be fair and tolerant in situations where conflicts arise? Are they sympathetic in the presence of suffering and indignant in the presence of injustice? Do they show greater concern about questions of civic, social,



and economic importance? Are they using their spending money more wisely? Are they becoming more skillful in doing some useful type of work? Are they more honest, more reliable, more temperate, more humane? Are they finding happiness in their present family life? Are they living in accordance with the rules of health? Are they acquiring skills in using all of the fundamental tools of learning? Are they curious about the natural world about them? Do they appreciate, each to the fullest degree possible, their rich inheritance in art, literature, and music? Do they balk at being led around by their prejudices?

These are criteria suitable for estimating the effectiveness of a democratic school system—suitable because directly related to the basic purposes. Until such criteria assume high importance in measuring educational results, the stated purposes of education are not likely to penetrate very fully into practice.

### *A Complete Catalogue of Conditioning Factors Is Not Attempted*

This final chapter has dealt with certain conditions which now affect the work of American schools. These conditions must be improved if the proper and essential objectives of education in a democracy are to be realized. The weaknesses enumerated and the remedies tentatively proposed are not to be regarded as complete and final statements. A complete discussion of ways and means for improving American education would anticipate and include the entire program of an educational policies commission—a program which in the main is still on the anvil of discussion. To locate the differences between educational theory and practice, to arrange these differences according to their importance, to probe for their causes, to prescribe for their removal, and to appraise the results of the entire process—these are the persistent tasks of educational leadership.